HOW THE EARLY HEBREWS LIVED AND LEARNED

EDNA M. BONSER

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HOW THE EARLY HEBREWS LIVED AND LEARNED

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HOW THE EARLY HEBREWS LIVED AND LEARNED

BY

EDNA M. BONSER

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INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of This Book. The form of presentation chosen is based on the conviction that the Old Testament can be made an important element in the education of children. That end has been kept steadily in view. The great aim in the material admitted and the treatment given it, has been to make plain what great progress during the period of about 1500 years covered by the stories, the descendants of Abraham made in every phase of life—agricultural, industrial, social, literary, and religious. Full advantage has been taken of the opportunity afforded by the numberless incidental references in the record to fill out the picture of the daily lives of the people, the lands in which they lived, their different ways of making a living, their industries, their methods of warfare, their forms of government, their means of recreation and enjoyment, and their forms of worship.

Their clearer and finer conception of God and of man's relationship to Him was the chief contribution which these Hebrew people made to the progress of the human race. The Old Testament is the record of a growing social and spiritual life with all of the struggles, defeats, and successes inseparably associated with and natural to social and spiritual growth. From time to time great, heroic characters arose who supplied spiritual fuel for the fires in which their religious ideal was gradually purified, and its guidance became more sure. A succession of these men kept the vital flame aglow

through hundreds of years of tragedy and triumph, until its light shone forth beyond the land of Abraham and Moses to all the peoples of the earth.

To select the vital parts of the story for the purpose thus explained and assemble them so that they will portray the essential progress of the movement in ways that will appeal to the interests and experiences of children, describes the plan and structure of this volume.

Where the Book May Be Used. Many schools are including in the grades a study of Hebrew history as a part of the general study of the steps of progress from age to age by which our human predecessors prepared the way for the complex life of the present day. The material of this book may be used for this purpose in public and private school work; it may be used in connection with courses in religious education for children, either in Sunday schools or week-day schools; or, it may serve as an interesting and stimulating form of supplementary or home reading for children.

Standards Observed in Presenting the Material. Two outstanding principles have been followed in preparing the stories. First of all, an attempt has been made to avoid any statement as of fact that is at variance with historical evidence. Second, a conscious effort has been made to put into application the substance of child psychology and the principles of teaching. Many of the stories, several of the suggested dramatizations, and much of the constructive work suggested have had the benefit of revision after use with different groups of children under the direction of well trained teachers. The most trustworthy modern authorities have been consulted, and every effort has been made to present the material so that the impressions it will produce shall be in harmony with the truth in so far as we know it. De-

pendence upon the scholarly researches of many writers is gratefully acknowledged.

The Use of Practical Activities in Teaching. The dramatizations, constructions, and other forms of illustrative work suggested are of the very highest value in helping the children to get the meaning of the circumstances and events in question more fully, and in enabling them to live their way into a really appreciative understanding of the spirit and times of the people studied. Children enter into such activities with zest, and come to know the stories altogether more thoroughly by the reading needed to carry forward the dramatizations and constructions. They may do some of it outside of class and this helps to carry the continuity of the work from period to period. These operations will constantly stimulate thought, questions, initiative, and practical investigations and inquiries, the very food upon which mental life grows. Such work will well repay whatever initial effort it takes on the part of teachers to get it under way. Once started, it will largely go of itself. By encouraging the children to suggest appropriate kinds of activity, and guiding them in their undertakings, they soon become very skillful in selecting what they can use from their reading of supplementary material, in collecting pictures and other related reference matter, and in planning ways to put the most meaning and interest into the stories.

Equipment and Materials for Hand Work. Very simple equipment is all that is needed for the practical activities suggested. A sand table is very desirable, but if it cannot be had then an ordinary table with short legs may be used and models made of paper, cardboard, or clay instead of sand. If no table is available, one or

more spare desks may be used, or the work may even be done on the floor in a corner of the room.

Several pairs of scissors, an assortment of colored crayons, a few bottles or tubes of library paste or liquid glue, needles, thimbles, and thread, a few hammers and rulers, one or two saws and try-squares, and an assortment of tacks and small nails are about all that will be needed for most of the work indicated. Materials to be used, such as paper, cardboard, cloth, clay, and wood, may be either purchased or collected as needed. Scraps of wrapping paper and wall paper, and of cloth from the homes of the children often are quite sufficient. Discarded pasteboard boxes, and boxes or crates of wood may be secured by the children or teacher at little or no cost. Tools and equipment needed only now and then may usually be borrowed for the occasions from the homes of the children or from the school shop.

When figures, costumes, and other properties are made, they should be retained for later use to avoid any unprofitable repetitions and to save time. Each class, however, should do such illustrative work for itself as is necessary to make the meaning clear.

A book that will be helpful in the dramatizations is, "The Dramatization of Bible Stories," by Elizabeth E. Miller, published by The University of Chicago Press; for the problems in geography, a very useful book is, "Biblical Geography and History," by C. F. Kent, published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York; and for industrial arts information and constructions, "Industrial Arts for Elementary Schools," by F. G. Bonser and L. C. Mossman, published by the Macmillan Company, New York, will be found very helpful, for both its text and its illustrations.

If children keep booklets about the stories, much il-

lustrative work in pencil, crayon, or cut-out pasted figures may be used to advantage, and maps to indicate locations and journeys will occasionally be needed to make the record interesting and complete. Small pictures of appropriate subjects may also be purchased from publishers of school pictures and inserted in booklets. It is desirable to have children keep such booklets, but the children themselves should choose what they wish to put into them. Suggestion and discussion will usually lead to the best results in the way of selections. Individuality will express itself in this kind of work, and originality and freedom of choice should be encouraged to evoke the best that is in each child.

The Time Element in the Stories. While little attempt has been made in most cases to fix the dates of the events selected, careful attention has been given to the development of a sense of the sequence of the stories, and to the formation of a general impression of the periods of time represented. Although authorities differ much about the dates of many events, the following periods seem to be approximately right, and some appreciation of the sweep of years covered by the stories may be had by remembering:

That Abraham was born a little more than 2000 years before Christ.

That it was about 250 years after Abraham left Ur when Joseph was sold into Egypt.

That it was about 425 years from the days of Joseph to the Exodus.

That it was about 350 years from the Exodus to the building of Solomon's Temple.

That it was about 440 years from the building of Solomon's Temple to the return of the Hebrews from their Babylonian exile. The period of the exile was

about 70 years. The return from the exile began about 536 years before Christ.

These stories thus cover a period of almost 1500 years. The length of some of these periods of time may be appreciated to some degree by thinking that the whole history of our own country since its discovery by Columbus in 1492, covers only about the same period of time as that in which the Hebrews remained in Egypt.

The Use of Geography. Several maps have been included to indicate the location of the more important places mentioned in the stories. But these should be supplemented by the use of text-book maps in geographies and by wall maps. The children should get a notion of the general location with reference to their own homes of the countries and places mentioned, and also with reference to the other countries of Europe, Asia, and Africa.

Jerusalem is almost exactly due east of Jacksonville, Florida. The distance from New York to Jerusalem is approximately 7,500 miles. By the constant use of maps to visualize locations, and by fixing in mind a few facts to establish the knowledge of general directions, distances, and relationships, the locational geography of the stories will come to be known almost incidentally. Due emphasis should be given to the influences of climate, soils, altitudes, water courses, plants, animals, and other natural resources upon the lives and activities of the people.

Practical Activities Listed Are Suggestive. It should at all times be remembered that the directions for dramatizations, constructions, and other forms of illustrative work are merely *suggestive*. When teachers think it wise, suggestions for particular forms of illustrative activity may be omitted, or other forms substi-

tuted. Both children and teachers will often think of valuable and interesting forms of work not specifically mentioned. Many incidents not suggested for dramatization may be simply acted, not for the sake of an audience, but as a help to the clarification of their meanings, and for the children's own enjoyment.

Teachers should feel the greatest freedom in using any form of supplementary and illustrative work, and should encourage children to suggest ways of making the work as clear and interesting as possible. Books, magazines, newspapers, and pictures may often be used to supplement the stories. Comparisons of the ways and ideals of our own time with those of other peoples studied should be made. Children should be helped to develop an appreciation of the debt we owe to those who by their struggles and triumphs found the new and better ways of living and thinking that we now profit by and enjoy.

EDNA MADISON BONSER

LEONIA, NEW JERSEY, May 1, 1924.

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HOW THE EARLY HEBREWS LIVED AND LEARNED

STORIES OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND JACOB

THE IMAGE THAT BOUGHT A LITTLE LAMB

"WHAT is that you are making, father?" A little rosy-cheeked boy stood by his father's workbench and asked the question.

"When it is finished it will be a god,[1] little Abram, a little household image,[2] to be called Heth."

"It is very ugly," said the little boy. "Why do you make it?"

"I make it because the people need it. They buy

[1] **Gods.** The people of this time believed that the elements—earth, sky and sea, storm, sun and moon—as well as mankind, were in the control of powerful spirits. Their favor was shown to men by bountiful harvests and large families, their anger by sending disease, disaster and death.

Sin, the moon god, whose chief temples were at Ur and Haran, it was believed, guided the destinies of the caravans through the moonlit nights.

Anu was the god of the sky.

Ea was the god of the waters.

Shamash was the god of the sun.

Rimmon was the god of the storm.

Bal or Baal was the god of the earth and mankind.

Certain cities would have patron gods, as for example, the god Sin, for the city of Ur.

[2] **Household images.** Small wood or clay or bronze images of these gods were made to be set up like an altar in the houses or tents, or to be carried about in times of special need. They were made in various forms. Some were life size, some quite small. Some were formed like men, as a help in praying, or half man, half animal, such as a dog or monkey.

my images and with the money[3] which they pay me I can buy milk and cheese for you to eat, my child. Without this 'ugly one,' as you call it, and others that I make, you might often go hungry to sleep. How would you like that? See, he is not so ugly," cried the old man, holding up the little image in the bright morning sunshine. "Perhaps he is not handsome, but what of that? They who buy him do so to honor him and pray to him for a full harvest. He hears. He answers. Pray to him, little son. He will bring good fortune."

But the little boy turned his eyes away from the dark, queer, little image and looked out of the door up to the soft, blue morning sky and the shining river. He shook back his dark curls and said, "I do not like him, father. Is there not some fairer god—some beautiful, loving god who made the sunshine and the river?" He broke off in confusion because his father looked at him so sternly and whispered, "Hush, you saucy one. What do you know of the gods? And here comes one who may like and buy him."

As he spoke a tall, gaunt man entered at the door and said, "Good Terah, I am in great trouble. Robbers have stolen my grain. My sheep die and even my son has gone away and left me. Please sell me an image that I may set it in my tent and beseech it to bring me good fortune."

Then Terah, lifting the image upon which he had been at work, said, "I know you not, whether or not you will be able to repay me. Yet I have here just finished an

[3] **Money.** Eastern peoples at this time used gold and silver in bars in trade but did not have coined money. They had, however, a definite rate of exchange differing for silver and gold.

One shekel of silver weighing nine dwts., eight and eight-tenths grs., equaled 64 cents of our money.

One maneh equaled 50 shekels, or $32.00.

One talent equaled 60 manehs, or $1920.00.

A great deal of barter, that is, exchange of commodities, went on.

image of Heth, him who guards men from the misfortunes of which you speak. For the price of one small lamb it shall be yours."

Little Abram was listening to all this very intently. The man looked so poor and ragged and sad that he felt very sorry for him. Perhaps he had not the price of one small lamb. But after fumbling among his rags, under his great coat, he brought out, much to Terah's and Abram's surprise, not money but a small, brown lamb, so little, so thin and weak that it could hardly stand on its long, wabbly legs.

"It is true," he said humbly, "I have no money. And this tiny creature is almost the last remnant of my flocks. Yes, there is life in him yet. See! He can stand. I will sell him to you for yonder little image to which I shall pray for better fortune."

"O father, father," cried little Abram, "the poor lamb is *so* hungry! Give the man the ugly image and bid me give the lamb my cup of milk."[4]

But the old image-maker held up his hands in horror and said to the man, "The creature is already half dead, and you wish me to exchange for it one of my images over which I have toiled for many hours. How do you think I could make a living if I exchanged good images for half-dead lambs?"

"He is not dead, father," cried little Abram. "See, he has drunk all my milk. Let us keep him and some day soon we may have great flocks of our own."

"It is sheer waste," grumbled the old man. "But here," holding out the image, "Here is the image. See to it that you bring me no more such bargains or I will have my kindred chase you from Ur."

"I thank you, my good Terah," said the man, as he

[4] **Cup.** Abram's cup was probably made of silver or bronze or clay, much the same shape as our cups, except that it probably had no handle. Cups and bowls of clay much like those used by Abram may be made by the children.

hid the image under his ragged girdle. "I go, and may the gods smile upon you in blessing!"

"Father," said little Abram, when the man was gone and the little shop was so quiet that the chirping birds in the garden could be heard above the soft lapping of the river Euphrates as it flowed past them on its way to the sea, "When I am a man I shall have many herds of sheep and I shall go on long journeys. Who knows but I may find a better god?"

WHY ABRAM WANTED TO GO AWAY

MANY years have passed away and the little, rosy-cheeked boy who traded a little, brown lamb for an ugly image is now a grown man.

He is sitting again visiting with his father in the little house in Ur,[1] for he no longer really lives there. His real home is in the country. There he has great flocks of sheep and camels, goats and fowls. He is a very rich,[2] powerful man, chief of his tribe.

Ur. An ancient, walled city of Babylonia on the western bank of the river Euphrates just before its juncture with the Tigris river. No trace of it remains to-day. It was an important station on the caravan route between India and Egypt. Its houses were built of sun-dried clay or mud bricks around a court which afforded shelter and protection for men and animals alike. Sometimes this court yard had a fountain and beautiful flowers growing in it. Ur was noted for its great temple to the moon-god, Sin, as was also the city of Haran farther north.

[2] **Abram's wealth.** The wealth of a chief consisted in great flocks of sheep, goats, camels, and donkeys, or asses. The sheep supplied food and clothing. The camel was an ideal beast of burden because of his endurance, his great, padded hoof, and the valve-like structure of his nostrils. His hair was woven into cloth for tents and clothing and the milk was a palatable food. The donkey, as a beast of burden, was valued greatly because of his sure-footedness. He took the lead in the caravans because of this sure-footedness.

"Father," said Abram, "I would like so much to go away from Ur."

"Go away!" cried Terah. "Isn't this great, fine city a good place to live? We have good houses here, guarded by strong walls to keep out our enemies. Ur is the richest, largest city in the world. We have wise and learned men. We have a beautiful temple to Sin, the moon god. The caravans bring to Ur treasure from all parts of the world. What more can you want?"

"Oh, I know all this to be true," said Abram, "but there is no pasture for my flocks in Ur. For them I must have wide fields and cool streams of water. Then, too, I am sick of these idols which the men of Ur worship. I want to get out and away where we can be free."

"In the desert, my son, you will have only a goat-skin tent for a house, and even that must be changed from place to place. Here you have a warm and sunny court with a fountain and lovely flowers. In the evening you can go up to the roof and enjoy the cool air and watch the stars."

"Father," said Abram earnestly, "These walls are too close. There are too many people here. They are not good people. I have dreamed and in my dreams I seem to hear God calling me to some far off place where I can learn more about Him. We have many kinsmen who will go with us. I think Lot, my nephew, would like to go with me; but I do not like to go and leave you alone here in Ur."

"Well," said Terah, slowly, "I see how strongly you feel about it. There is no real reason why I should not go with you. I will pray to Sin, him who guides the caravans over the deserts, and he will bring us in safety to some good place."

"I am so glad you will go, but pray not to Sin. He cannot help us. Pray to our own God, who is able to guard us from danger. I have waited but to talk with

you. All else is ready. To-night we will have a council with our clansmen[3] in my tents. Will you come and talk the matter over?"

"Yes, yes. I will come," said Terah.

Related Work. Locate Ur upon a map of this region.

A model of Terah's house and of the walls of the city may be made of small bricks of clay. Make a plan on paper of the house showing rooms around an open court. The bricks may be made in molds. To make these molds tack narrow strips of wood to the sides of a board two inches wide. Let the strips extend one-half inch above the board. Place thin partitions one inch apart across the space enclosed by the strips. This will make the molds two inches long, one inch wide, and one-half inch deep. To make bricks press the molds full of clay. When the bricks have been dried enough to remove them take them out of the molds and place them where it is warm and dry until they have thoroughly dried. The bricks of early peoples were sun dried.

To build the houses and walls make a thin mortar of clay and water, placing a thin layer of this between the bricks as they are laid one upon another. Children may be prompted to observe in a brick wall or chimney one or more forms of arrangement of the bricks.

THE COUNCIL

It is evening time upon the desert where Abram's tents[1] are pitched. The fierce heat of the day is over

[3] **Clan or tribe.** A group of people related by blood who live together under the control of a chief, who is made chief because he is a born leader of men. Many clans intermarried. Abram's clan did. But their numbers also increased by means of purchase and capture. People so added to a clan were made slaves.

[1] **A tent.** The tents Abram used were probably made of goat skins sewn together or of goat's hair or camel's hair woven. Some of the tents were black, some of them were white or of alternate strips of black and white. The tents were supported by nine poles of varying height and were staked down by rope and tent stake or held in place by stones. The tents were divided into three compartments. The front

Ancient Oriental Lamps

An Ancient Clay Lamp with Several Wicks

Egyptian Vases and Lamps

Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art

and a cool breeze blows from the distant mountains. The shepherds are bringing in the flocks which all day have been grazing in the oases. Though they are great, dark, rough looking men, they are not rough with the sheep. They each call the sheep of his own flock by name and the sheep come running after the shepherds. A head shepherd numbers or tallies the sheep as they are turned into the folds for the night to see that none is missing.[2]

Before Chief Abram's tent a little group is gathered, lying on rugs or cushions or sitting cross-legged in the warm sand. Abram himself, dressed in the scarlet robe of the chief and bearing in his hand the great shepherd's staff, is pacing slowly up and down. Within the shelter of the low, black tent the lamp always kept burning[3] casts flickering shadows, but outside the moonlight is growing stronger. Terah is there, a trembling old man. Sarai is there, seated among the shadows, and Lot, the well loved nephew, son of Haran, is there. They are talking together very earnestly.

"Last night," says Abram, "as I lay in my bed I dreamed a dream. It seemed in my dream that we were

part was used by the slaves, the second by men, and the third by women. They were furnished with beds, simple mats or pads that were rolled up in the day time and used as chairs; rugs; a stool or two; and a lamp that was always kept alight. The sides of the tent could be raised to allow the cool breezes to enter. The chief of a clan had his own tent, as did also his favorite wife.

[2] **The Sheepfold.** The sheepfold was formed by the circle of the tents. When the tribe stayed in one place for a season a wall was built of rock cemented together by clay-like mud, within the circle made by the tents. This was about twelve feet high and around the top edges were placed thorns, to keep out thieves and wild animals. The sheepfolds were divided into compartments for different kinds of animals. When the tribe was on the march, the fold was only a very temporary affair and the sheep were guarded by fires kept all night, and by shepherds.

[3] **The lamp.** The lamp that burned day and night was probably a stone lamp, fed by animal fat, that they might always have fire; or possibly it had some religious significance.

far away from this city of Ur, whose walls lie yonder in the darkness. We were in some free, open place where no man was greater than we. In my dream a voice spoke to me. 'Go,' it said, 'seek out a home for your kindred and I will make of you a great Nation.' I believe God spoke to me in my dream." He stopped in his nervous pacing up and down and looked up at the stars.

Then Terah spoke in his trembling old voice. "I am an old man," he said. "I have dwelt many, long years in Ur. My home and all my friends are there. My garden and all the singing birds I shall miss sorely. But if you go, Abram, I must go too. The time is not far distant when I must die. I grieve not that it is so; but when I die I must be among those I love. All that I have I give to you freely. Only leave me not."

Then Abram came and knelt before his father. "Your comfort shall be our first care," he cried. "You shall ride upon Nol, the swiftest, stateliest camel of them all. You shall eat first and sleep in safety. Are you not our father?"

Then Abram turned to Lot, his nephew, and said, "I have no son of my own; but in you, the son of my brother, do I find comfort. Do you wish to go on this long, perilous journey with me?"

Lot sprang to his feet and spoke eagerly. "My Uncle Abram, I have little wealth in gold and flocks, but I have many young kinsmen and servants of a bold spirit, who know well the use of the bow, the sword and the sling.[4] They will know well how to defend our caravan from the bands of robbers that infest the desert. Some of them will ride far ahead and seek out the smoothest paths for the tender feet of our flocks. Among them

[4] **Weapons.** These people had weapons of bronze, a mixture of brass and tin, such as axes, swords and knives; also the bow and arrow, the sling, and staves, or sharpened sticks possibly tipped with bronze.

are cunning hunters who will keep us supplied with fresh meat. I am eager to be off and away to see the world."

Abram smiled and said, "We could scarcely journey without you and your bold, young friends. Be ready, then, at the time of the next full moon. It is then that I plan to start."

Then Sarai, Abram's wife, spoke softly but clearly. "My lord, I fear this long and dangerous travel, but because of my love for you, I go gladly. I and my women will prepare the food and care for the clothing and guard the little ones. And when we come to that fair land of which you dream we will make homes for you."

"It is settled, then," said Abram. "We go. Count the herds and herdsmen. Make ready the tents and the food. Look to your weapons, Lot, and appoint captains and guards. I will change our wealth into such forms as can be easiest carried and hidden. We shall start before another moon shall wane. May God guide us to our better home."[5]

Related Work. Abram's camp with his own tent and several others may be made of cut-out paper tents and figures showing the Council gathered before the leader. For the figures, images may also be made of clay or other material if preferred, and the tents may be made of sticks and scraps of cloth. For a description of a tent, consult Note 1, and pictures containing Oriental tents. Figures of people should be dressed in long, flowing robes of black, except Abram, whose robe was red. Robes were confined by girdles of leather or silk. Headdresses were made of white cloth drawn tightly in front and tied behind with ends hanging. Keep any good figures made for later use.

A sheepfold may also be made from the description in Note 2, and figures of sheep, goats, donkeys, and camels placed in it.

A lamp in form like Abram's may be made of clay. The illustration opposite page 7 includes forms of lamps that were probably much

[5] **Destination.** It is probable that Abram had in mind the land of Canaan, west of Ur, which was separated from Ur by an impassable desert.

like those used in Ur at this time. The lamp should contain fat with a wick of cloth or fiber.

Weapons may be made by the children at home and brought to class. Bows and arrows may be made of wood; swords, spears, and knives of cardboard or wood.

THE CARAVAN STARTS

One little flat-roofed house in Ur is empty and silent. The flowers bloom in the garden, the birds sing, and the river glides away as always, but Terah and Abram and Sarai and Lot, with all their possessions, all their servants and kinsmen[1] are gone away. The morning sunlight but fairly tipped the dark, old walls of Ur, and touched the dome of the vast temple of the Moon god, Sin, when the caravan was ready to start.

The tiny asses are heavy laden. They carry the water skins and kneading troughs and grinding stones. They carry all the tent furnishings, the robes of skin for coverings, the curtains, the cooking pots and stones, even the food of grain or fruits and wines. Behind them, in stately file, come the camels, bearing in their high basket-saddles the old men, the women and the little children. They have tinkling bells on their leather bridles and these all jangle in a harsh noise as they toss their great heads. Behind these come other camels, beasts of burden, heavy laden with tents and furniture. Each camel has his driver, who goads him on. He is called a camel boy.

Then come the flocks of sheep, guarded by shepherds and great wolf-like dogs, and around them all, mounted on swift horses, are the soldiers, those bold young men of whom Lot spoke, whose duty it is to guard the cara-

[1] Number of people in caravan. It is believed that Abram had about three hundred people in his caravan.

van from the swift robber bands that infest the desert. A whole tribe, or clan, known later as the Hebrews, is going out of the city of Ur under the leadership of Abram.

The idle watchers of the streets stare at it for a little. The great gates open wide, then clang shut behind it. The dust rises in a great cloud before and behind. For a little distance the company follows a well beaten trail. Then its commander points northward and the hoofs of the donkeys, the great, soft pads of the camels, the sandal-shod feet of the shepherds, the sharp hoofs of the sheep all sink into the half-trodden caravan route[2] of the desert. Abram, that great Hebrew, who despised idols and dreamed of God, is started upon his long quest.

From the saddle of his great, brown camel Abram directed the caravan. He chose the route by which they should travel, how far they should go in a day and where and when they should camp. This time he directed the caravan to follow the course of the river Euphrates north-west. He did this for two reasons. To go east or south would take them into lands already in possession of tribes older in civilization, whose customs Abram hated and feared.[3] A great and trackless desert lay to the west. Therefore Abram must go northward, though his real destination, the land of Canaan, which he hoped to reach, lay west and south. He must not forsake the river whose cool water and grassy banks meant life to all his flocks and people. It may be that Abram directed his course by the aid of the stars, as

[2] **Caravan route.** There was, even at this early date, a well defined caravan route from points in India and further east to the great sea (the Mediterranean Sea), and onward into Egypt. Over this trail went all the traffic of the known world.

[3] **Customs feared by Abram.** Idolatry and the gross forms of nature worship which were practiced by the Babylonians, Persians, and Chaldeans.

mariners know how to use them to guide their ships over trackless wastes of water.

On this first day they made good progress, for they were all fresh, eager and untired. They may have travelled as far as ten miles. When the sun had reached the highest tops of the far off mountains, Abram, lifting his great shepherd's spear or staff, thrust it deep into the ground as a signal for the caravan to halt. This did not mean that each animal and man stopped where he stood. It meant, rather, that the leader halted while the whole caravan formed a circle of which he was the beginning and the end. Into this circle the flocks were driven, that they might be safe from wandering and getting lost or being devoured by wild animals.[4]

The tall camels knelt and from their saddles the women and the children clambered down, glad to be free. The hungry sheep fell to nibbling. The little lambs called in little plaintive baaa-as to their mothers. The dogs barked. The men shouted and scolded and all was confusion and disorder.

Some ran to the river for water.[5] Some lighted the fires,[6] some spread the little, low tents, and others unpacked the food. Very soon order and quiet replaced the confusion. The great, red sun dropped behind the mountains. The full, silver moon rose in the east. The people rested and ate for food, cheese and thin, sweet cakes of bread. Then they had honey and dried fruit of some kind. The little children had their cups of

[4] **Animals feared.** Lions, bears, wolves, jackals.

[5] **Water vessels.** Goat skins cured, with the legs tied tight, were used for carrying water. Also earthen jars were used. The skin bottle was made by drawing the skin from the body without tearing. The hide was then tanned with aromatic barks, the openings were sewed up, and it was then hung by the fire to dry.

[6] **Fire.** Fire was obtained in two ways. It was carried from place to place in a vessel or lamp, or it was kindled by twirling a stick or striking flint.

The Lands of the Old Testament Stories

The dotted line shows the probable route of Abraham from Ur of Chaldea to Haran, and later from Haran to the Land of Canaan.

warm, fresh milk. It is possible that the Chief had wine, the thin sour wine of wild grapes.

In the quiet hour which followed the evening meal, Abram stood at his tent door and said, "Gather around my camp fire and I will tell you a marvelous tale."

This pleased the people very much, and though the little children dropped asleep in their mother's arms, all who were older listened eagerly to Abram.

Standing before the fire, with his long, red robe falling about him, Abram said, "Long, long ago, before men lived upon the earth, or even before the sun or the moon or the stars reigned in the heavens, God lived. And God looked around Him upon desolation, a great, formless waste of water. And the spirit of God moved upon the waters. And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light."

O marvelous tale, told by the flickering camp fire to dark-eyed desert children of men! The people sighing, leaned forward to listen to Abram.

"And in six days," continued Abram, "God created the heaven and the earth, the sea and all that is therein; the birds of the air, the cattle of the fields, and all manner of creeping things. And God made man in his own image. Male and female created He them. And He set them in the midst of a beautiful garden, called the Garden of Eden. There was in the garden all manner of beautiful flowers and fruit, sweet and ripe. There were rivers of clear water and contented animals that lived together without fear or strife.

"And He called the name of the man, Adam, and the name of the woman, Eve. These were our first father and mother."

The story ended, all the caravan became quiet. The campfires flickered and died down. The moon sank behind the mountains. The stars burned clear and deep in the sky. Out on the desert a lion called to his

mate and the sheep in the camp circle huddled closer together.

Under the shelter of their low, skin tents the people slept until the rising sun woke them and they started again on their travels.

Related Work. Make a miniature caravan. Pictures of caravans should be observed to make meanings as clear as possible. Note the relative sizes of animals and people. Figures of clay, cardboard, or stiff paper may be made to represent some of the principal characters. Camels, sheep, goats, and donkeys may be made of clay, cardboard or paper. In making the caravan the donkeys should be loaded with tents, poles, and mats. The camels used for carrying persons should be saddled and decorated with gay trappings of paper or cloth. If children have toy camels or sheep these may be added. By the use of the sand table, a very effective desert scene with a caravan may be produced.

Refer to the map for the location of Ur and the route of Abram's caravan.

Pictures may be drawn for note books or posters with pencil, crayon, charcoal, or water colors to represent different scenes in this story as the imaginations of children may see them.

NETH, THE SCOUT

THERE was one man in the caravan you should know very well indeed, because he was so important, so necessary to the welfare and happiness of all the people. His name was Neth.[1] He was a friend of Lot. It was Lot who first brought Neth to talk with Abram.

Neth was a thin, dark, alert young man who could shoot straight and true with bow and arrow, throw stones from a sling with skill, and run and swim faster than anybody else. He could hear like a cat. He was

[1] **Nĕth.**

as cunning as a fox and he could not get lost. In the darkest night he could find his way home.

When Lot brought Neth to Abram he said, "My Uncle, here is a man whom I advise you to appoint as the captain of a group of scouts to ride or run ahead of the caravan and spy out for all kinds of danger. I know him well. He is fearless. He is cunning, and he cannot get lost."

This made Abram smile, but he looked very kindly at Neth and said, "Are you willing to undertake this dangerous work of which you have heard Lot speak?"

Now, while Lot had spoken only truth of Neth, and he was brave and cunning, he was too modest to say so to the great master of the caravan, and could only stand, digging his toes into the sand and blushing. But finally he managed to say, "I am your servant, Master."

And Abram said, "It is well. Choose you for him, Lot, a number of young men who shall serve under him. Let them be well armed and, if need be, mounted. There are many dangers. Neth shall warn us against them."

This made Neth feel very happy and important. Here is the story of how Neth and his comrades saved the caravan from robbers.

It was near the close of a long, hot day of travel through the half-green hills that bordered the river. To the left lay the shining, cruel desert, desolate and bare of all life. Somewhere to the right lay the river, cool and dark under its cliffs, and in between these, following the regular caravan route, wound Abram's long, gray caravan. They were no longer gay and light-hearted, but plodded along through the sand, weary and discouraged. High on the backs of swaying camels, mothers crooned to fretting little ones. The hot sand, borne by the wind, cut and stung the faces of the travelers. Still they bore on and on.

Some one far down the line—it was Relf[2] the singer, he of the shining, black eyes and nimble, dancing toes—sang a little, lilting tune over and over:

Me—a, Me—a.
O thou, my wildling!
Sweet is the rest at the close of the day.

Far ahead, among the rocks and gullies that marked the approach to the next fording place,[3] there lay hidden a band of desert robbers.[4] They were waiting for the weary caravan with its rich treasures to fall into their ambush. They were armed with swords and spears. Behind them, hidden in the rocks, stood waiting the swift Arab horses to carry them away with the plunder they expected to seize. When the master of the caravan, on his great camel, should be out in the midst of the stream, then would they strike. Then they would kill the men, capture the young and lovely women and rifle the pack animals of their treasures. Lying in hidden places, thus they planned their attack.

But what is that gleam of color, half under the water that swirls nearest the shore where the robber captain lies hidden? Surely it is but trailing grass or a bit of wreckage. Strange! For now it is gone, not as seaweed goes, drifting with the current, but gone swiftly and silently. In a few moments, far down the river, a ragged, dripping figure slips from the water just in time to intercept the caravan.

"Halt!" cries the ragged, dripping figure.

[2] **Rĕlf.**

[3] **Fording place.** The caravan must stay close to the river for the sake of water and grass. But the river wound about and often it shortened the journey to ford it rather than to follow its windings. To ford a stream means to wade across it at a shallow place.

[4] **Robbers.** The deserts were full of bands of half wild men who made their living by attacking and robbing the caravans. They usually rode swift horses and could easily escape from the slow moving camels. They were armed with bows and arrows and knives or daggers.

"Halt!" goes ringing down the long line, and donkeys and camels, sheep and shepherds, all glad for a little rest, come to a standstill.

And there is Neth, brave, cunning Neth. He was the bit of swaying weed in the river. His keen ears had heard the robbers' plans. And now, all his bashfulness forgotten, he pours out the whole story to Abram.

Quickly Abram strikes his staff into the earth. Quickly the camp circle forms. Lot and his young men, each with his bow or lance, come riding down the line.

What is that in the distance? The last few of the horsemen, who had planned to kill and pillage, are fleeing away to their desert homes.

That night, around the campfires, Neth is the hero, and this is the tale he tells. "Far ahead of the caravan I journeyed, watching, listening, for our enemies. By the river ford, where the water turns toward the east, I rested for a little. I sat on the great stone by the river's brink, close above the deep waters. Far in the distance I saw a little group of horsemen; saw them pause and gaze at our slow moving caravan; saw them circle it and ride swiftly ahead towards the fording place. Quickly I slipped into the water. I became as a drifting weed, moving but as the current carried my body, but clinging with my hands to the rocks. I heard the robbers plan to murder our master and pillage his rich stores. It was enough. Loosening my hold upon the rocks, I let the river carry me downward. I swam. I reached the shore. I ran. I warned our master. The robbers fled. See them fleeing across the sands! Ha! Ho! Neth is cunning and swift."

And all the people cried, "Ho! Ho! Neth is cunning and swift."

Related Work. If this story is dramatized, weapons will be needed for both Lot's men and the robbers. Little effort at costuming is necessary. A staff suitable for Abram can be easily supplied.

NOLETH, THE SHEPHERD

By the side of a little, flickering fire, Noleth,[1] the shepherd, sat warming his hands. All of the people of the caravan except him were asleep in their little tents. The little children were snuggled up close to their mothers. Even the little lambs were warm and quiet.

Only Noleth, the kind, strong shepherd, watched. Now he heard the long howl of the desert wolf hunting his prey. Again, he saw the shine of the yellow eyes of some wild creature who feared the fire even more than he wanted fresh lamb's meat.

Slowly the great stars moved across the heavens above him and at last there came in the east, the first, faint glow of morning. Then Noleth roused himself and called to his helpers.

"Ho! Lazy ones! See you not the morning?"

Then, letting down the woven bars of the sheepfold, he called his sheep by name. "Come, Napro. Come, Romba. Come forth, for the day is here. Darkness has gone. The sun has swallowed it up."

Then the sheep ran out of the folds and followed the shepherds out into the grassy meadows.

The shepherds wore only sheepskins for clothing.[2]

[1] **Nō'lĕth.**

[2] **Use of skins and wool for clothing.** The whole sheepskin was often used for clothing. When this was done the skin was removed with the wool remaining upon it. The skin was then cured. It was used as a coat or for covering at night, or for a rug or mat. But the wool was also sheared from the sheep and made into cloth which was used for clothing or curtains or coverings.

Shearing. Shearing time came in the spring when the sheep could best dispense with his warm coat. The sheep was driven into a small shed or pen, caught and securely tied, and its fleece cut off. The fleece was either sold to passing caravan traders in exchange for colored garments of cotton or linen, or it was woven into cloth.

But the wool of the sheep was sheared and woven into cloth. Their long, matted hair fell around their shoulders, half hiding their dark, sharp eyes. Each one carried a sling of leather, or perhaps merely a stick, into the end of which a stone could be fitted. Each carried also a crook with a curved end, that he might more easily direct the sheep or even draw one back into the pathway.

Abram, coming from his tent, watched them go. To Noleth he said, "How fare the sheep, Shepherd?"

"Not well, my lord. The lambs are aweary and a mountain lion, far from her lair and anhungered, hath

Spinning. The women spun the wool into thread, using a spindle and distaff.

Weaving. When the wool was spun into thread the women wove it into cloth on a simple hand loom, made of four sticks fastened together to form a square and notched at the edges to hold the thread. They wove the woof threads over and under the warp threads in much the same way as paper mats are woven, and pressed the threads together with a stick. They did not dye their cloth.

Clothing. The men and women dressed a great deal alike. The outer garment was made of wool and was a large, almost square, piece of cloth wrapped around the body or tied over the shoulders and fastened with buckles. It was called a simlah. The two corners were drawn over the shoulders so that they hung down in front and were called skirts or wings. The skirts were used for carrying fruits or herbs. In cold weather fur dresses or skins were used in place of the woolen outer garment. The undergarment, called a tunic, was made of linen and worn next to the skin. It was sewed together at the sides and fitted closely. Over the outer garment was worn the girdle or belt, which was two or three yards long and about half a yard wide. It was made of any material from a strip of leather or rope to the finest silk. The women had a loose, flowing outer garment made of blue cloth, which covered them from head to foot. Linen and silk were secured from caravans. A veil, which covered the hair but not the face, was often worn. The hair was long except in times of mourning, when it was shaved off.

The feet were loosely covered. Soft slippers were worn in the tents; but out of doors kubcobs, a kind of wooden stilt, were worn. Sandals were also worn, but never in the tents. The sandal was a sole of wood or hide, fastened with straps. The fashionable women wore anklets made of metal, sometimes of gold or silver, set with precious stones. They also wore nose rings, bracelets and earrings.

been following us. Bid me, my lord, to seek her out and slay her."

"Bid the shepherds carry the lambs that they drop not by the way. And you may take your bow and arrow and seek out the wild beast."

Then Noleth, giving over his staff to another shepherd, hid himself behind rocks and waited. All day he waited in the fierce, hot sunshine, creeping from rock to rock, peering out stealthily with his bow half-drawn. But it was not until half-darkness had come that he caught a fair sight of the lion. He raised himself to his feet. He stretched the arrow to the mighty bow. He drew back. He shot the lion where she stood. The great, tawny beast fell forward and was dead. Noleth's arrow had gone through her heart.

Then Noleth leaped and ran. He called for help.

"Ho! Comrades! I have slain a lion!"

Then two men came running. They tied the lion's feet together and slung her across a pole and went marching proudly into camp.

Oh, how the people shouted and danced and sang, and cried, "A feast! A feast! We shall have a feast!"

And Relf, he who sang on the journey, made up a little song:

> Noleth slew her.
> Out of the mountains came the lion.
> Noleth slew her.
> The sheep saw and trembled.
> The little lambs trembled.
> They fell down.
> The bow bent. The arrow flew.
> Great is Noleth!

That evening the campfires blazed high and all the people ate and danced and sang. Some broiled their meat over the coals. Some simmered it in skin or earthen

vessels, and some there were who waited not for fire but ate it warm and dripping as it came from the lion's body.

Far off in a den in the hills some baby lions waited long for the mother who came not, but the folk of the caravan slept, at last full-fed and content.

Related Work. Garments may be made of pieces of sheep pelt with the wool remaining on the skin. A piece of sheep pelt may often be gotten from a butcher's shop. A figure may be dressed to represent a Hebrew man with his tunic, semlah, and girdle; another to represent a Hebrew woman appropriately costumed as described in Note 1. Some children may wish to make sandals. Use leather for soles and straps of leather or strong cloth for tying them on.

Wool gotten from a sheep pelt may be combed, carded, spun, and woven into rugs or blankets for use in the tents. Children may make their own spindles for some hand spinning, and their looms for weaving.

THE CARAVAN RESTS

AFTER days of travel, all the people of the caravan grew very tired. So Abram decided to make camp and rest for a day or two in one place.

The weather was very dry and warm except at night, when the winds blew cold from the mountains. By and by the winter, with its cold rains, would come; but now it was summer. There was an abundance of sweet green grass for the sheep and cattle along the river.[1] There

[1] **Food.** The people of the caravan had such things as these to eat: Milk from the goats and camels; cheese, butter, bread, wild honey, fish, locusts, eggs, game, dried vegetables, dried fruits, or fresh wild fruits in season, roots and grasses, salt, spices, wines and oils.

They had but two meals a day, dinner before noon, and supper in the evening after sundown. A mat served as a table. The people sat cross-legged on mats or rugs on the ground. The men and women ate together. They ate with their fingers. Thin slices of bread were dipped into the dish. All ate from the same dish. Pieces of bread were used as napkins. The dishes were pottery ware and were very scarce. One dish usually held the meat, vegetables and bread. After the meal they washed their hands in water.

were wild game, birds, deer, hare and many little wild animals, and the fish in the river were so abundant that

Meat. The flesh of lambs, calves, kids and wild game, birds, hare, deer, bear and lions, also fish of all kinds, was roasted over the coals or boiled in pots. They also ate the locusts. These were gathered in heaps in the cool of the evening or morning. They were first boiled, then dried. After the wings and legs were removed, the bodies were powdered and mixed with butter and wild honey.

Bread. The bread was made from wheat, rye or barley, wheat bread being considered the best. They ground the meal by hand mills which they carried with them. The women always did the grinding, as it was thought unworthy of a man to do such work. The mill consisted of two flat stones, circular in form, placed one above the other. The upper one had a hole in the center. The grain was poured into this hole by one woman while another turned the upper stone around. The meal or flour would fall off the edges onto a cloth spread under the stones. It was then mixed with water, kneaded in a wooden bowl, and pressed by hand into little cakes, ready for baking. The wooden bowls or troughs were called mishereths.

After grinding and kneading came the baking. The people who stayed for a few days in one place built ovens by digging a hole in the ground about three feet deep, shaped like an inverted funnel, and plastering it with mud. They heated the oven by burning grass and twigs within. The surface of the mud lining became hard after heating. As soon as the mud wall was heated they pressed the thin cakes of bread onto the sides of the oven with their hands. The dough cooked almost as soon as it touched the oven and when taken out was no thicker than paper.

Butter. Churning was done in a bottle made from the skin of a goat or kid. The skin was folded over and sewed tightly around the edges, except at the neck. The milk of the camel, goat and sheep were all used and the churning had to be done every day because of the warm climate. To the corners of the skin bottle filled with milk, cords were tied and the skin was suspended from three sticks stuck in the ground, as a tripod. A girl sat beneath and swung the bottle to and fro. They also churned by means of treading or jumping on the bottle.

Cheese. The milk was curdled, then dried and made into cheese.

Eggs. They had the eggs of wild birds, in which the country abounded.

Honey. They had the honey of wild bees and bumble bees found in certain kinds of trees.

Dried vegetables. They had lentils, peas and beans.

Roots and wild fruits. Grasses. These consisted of wild carrots, wild grapes and apricots, leeks and garlic.

Oils. Olive and animal fats.

Salt and spices. These were probably bought from passing caravans.

they did not need hooks with which to catch them. When they travelled the people lived on dried foods,—cheese, dried fruits, perhaps a few dried lentils. Fresh meat must have tasted very delicious to them.

They were glad to rest for a few days, not only on account of food, but the axes needed sharpening and new arrow tips must be made. The worn sandals of those who walked must be renewed and fresh supplies of grain must be ground and bread baked that all might have bread to eat when they could not stop long enough to heat the stone-lined earthen ovens for baking.

Neth and his scouts went ahead to search out a suitable place for the whole clan to camp longer than over night. Soon Neth came riding back and told Abram that just ahead, at the turn of the river, there was a beautiful camping place.

"There," said Neth, "the river turns in its pathway and in the curve of its turning makes a great, green, shady meadow, large enough for us all. No danger can come to us except from the west. My men and I will guard the encampment."

"Well done, my faithful Neth," said Abram. Then he gave the signal and the weary caravan came to halt in camp formation.

"We will rest here for a few days," said Abram. "But let none be idle. Repair the clothing. Prepare food. Let the hunters go out for game. Look to our supply of arrows. Let the shepherds guard the flocks where the grass is richest and sweetest, that they may be able to travel farther shortly."

Very soon the whole camp was alive and humming with activity. Fires were kindled from flints struck together or from sticks twirled by skillful hands, or, it may be, from the lamp which burned night and day in the Chief's tent. The children ran laughing to bathe in the shallow waters or to fetch to their mothers the

Wanderers of the Desert

Note the low, spreading type of tent. Note also the stones in which the woman is grinding grain into flour or meal. In the top stone is a hole through which the grain is fed as this stone is revolved upon the lower one.

Jacob's Well, Palestine

By Courtesy of Perry Pictures Co., Malden, Mass.

water skins dripping full and cool. In front of every low, black tent two girls or women kept the grinding stones turning and the fragrant meal was mixed with water and baked in ovens into thin, sweet cakes of bread. The camels and donkeys, relieved of their heavy loads, lay down in the sand and rolled about, then drank their fill of water and fell to cropping the grass. The hunters soon came in with wild birds, venison and hare. From every little campfire there soon arose the sweet odor of broiling meat. They had milk to drink, dried fruits and cheese, and each one dipped his bread in the broth of the boiling pots and ate his fill without the aid of fork or spoon.

When all were finished and lay resting and chattering around the fires, Abram came from his broad, low tent and called to them.

"I will tell you a story," he said.

They loved stories, and since they had no books it was necessary for them to remember and pass on to their little ones the wonderful tales told about the campfires, tales of great deeds and adventures, tales of God and his tender care for them.

"My children," Abram began, "when God created the man and the woman, he told them to be fruitful and multiply, that there might be many people in the world. Therefore, before many years passed away, there were many, many people. But, alas! They were not good people and God determined to destroy them all.

"But there was one good man among them, named Noah. To this good man God came in a vision and said, 'Build thee now an ark, large and strong, and take with thee thy wife and children and two of every kind of animal upon the earth, and go into the ark. For all the people around you are so wicked that I have determined to destroy them. I shall send a flood and

they shall all be drowned. Only thee and thy family shall remain alive.'

"Now Noah had faith in God and at once he began to build the ark. But all the people laughed at him and no one would help him. But he persevered alone and soon the great ribs of the ark were in place. These were covered by boards and all were caulked and made water tight. And still the people jeered at Noah; called him a foolish old dreamer and complainer, and went about their work and play.

"But soon it began to rain. It rained and it rained, day after day and night after night, all day and all night, a heavy, steady downpour.

"And Noah brought his wife and his three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth and their wives, and two of every animal that he could find, and they all went into the ark and closed the doors.

"And still it rained. Soon the water lay deep over the earth and the people climbed the hills and the mountains. They carried their little ones with them and gazed anxiously at the heavy clouds. The wild animals came to the mountains, too, bearing in their mouths their little ones. Many began to be afraid and would gladly have gone into the ark with Noah, but the door was shut.

"Soon the water grew so deep that all the houses were covered and many people lay dead within them. Only those who had climbed the highest mountains were alive.

"For forty days and forty nights the rain continued and even the tops of the highest mountains were covered. All of the wicked people were drowned.

"But Noah and his family were safe in the ark. They looked out of the windows and could see only a wide, dreary waste of water. They felt very sad to know that all the people were dead, but very glad that God had saved them.

"Then Noah opened a window and set free a little white dove. The little dove circled around but found no tree or bit of earth to rest upon and came flying back. So Noah knew that the water covered the whole earth.

"He waited three days. Then he sent the little dove out again. This time she circled about and came flying back with a little olive twig in her beak. So Noah knew that the waters were subsiding. Soon the tops of the mountains appeared. Then the ark came to rest on the top of one of them and Noah and his wife and children came out. They knelt and made a thank offering to God who had saved them from death.

"Soon they began again to multiply and fill the earth with people. From Noah's three sons came three great races of men," said Abram. "We, all of us here, look to Shem as our father, for from him do we number our descent."

Abram paused and looked over his kinsmen as they sat in the circle of firelight. Some were asleep, worn out with their long travel. Some had not understood. But some there were who had listened with keen interest. They would tell the story years and years afterwards to their little ones and they in turn would tell it to their little ones, until all men everywhere would hear of Noah and the great flood.

Before they slept that night Abram said, "This God who saved Noah because he loved and served the good and who destroyed the wicked is our God, the one true, living God of all the earth. He has come to me in a vision and told me something of Himself. He is the great God of our tribe before whom all lesser gods must bow."

Then came darkness, and the little caravan slept out there in the desert. But we know of them to-day because they dreamed of that same living God of whom we dream.

Related Work. Make the encampment by setting up tents in a circle or oblong form, leaving space enough to enclose the animals of the caravan. Represent the river with its palm trees. Palm trees may be easily made of sticks to which green paper leaves are attached. If it is desired to make the encampment quickly, cut-paper tents and figures may be made. Avoid too much detail.

Butter may be made by putting some sour cream in a fruit jar, putting the rubber and lid on tightly, and shaking until the butter "comes." Or, the cream may be put into a jar or deep bowl and stirred with an egg beater until the butter is made. The butter should then be taken out and the water worked out of it and a little salt worked into it. It may then be eaten with bread or crackers, or upon cakes baked by the children.

Cheese may be made as follows: Pour boiling water over some clabbered milk; let it stand for about two hours; strain through a clean piece of cheese cloth. What remains in the cloth is cheese which may be salted and eaten.

Corn or wheat may be ground by using stones as described in the notes, or by the use of mortar and pestle. Still another simple way to make flour is to put some wheat into a cheese cloth sack; lay the sack on a clean stone and pound; when the wheat is pulverized, shake the sack over a bowl or pan and watch the flour sift out. Bread from the flour or meal may be made into small cakes and baked by the children or for them. A model of a Hebrew oven may be made. Visit a modern bakery and compare its methods of baking with those of the Hebrews.

Identify all of the foods noted in the story or notes. Compare lentils with peas and beans. Dry some fruits and vegetables, as berries, apples, or pumpkin.

Plan a picnic and cook meat by broiling over the coals of a camp fire.

Learn how early peoples made a fire by the use of a twirling stick, or striking sparks from a flint stone.

ABRAM SAYS GOOD-BYE TO TERAH

AFTER many long days of travel, broken by occasional days of rest, the caravan came near to another city not

quite so large as Ur, which they had left so far behind them, but like Ur in having a great temple to the moon god, Sin. This city was also protected by a great wall. It was called Haran. From the back of his tall, brown camel Terah first saw the walls and temple of Haran and called to his son.

"Abram! Abram! Do you not see the great city before us?"

Shading his eyes with his hands, Abram gazed long and earnestly out over the shimmering plains to the spot where the low flat roofs and mud walls might be seen of what seemed to them a great city.

Haran lay upon the plains beside a tributary of the river whose windings they had been following. Beyond it the mountains lifted their heads into the clouds. Around it stretched a fertile valley, shaded by great oaks, rich in grass for the flocks, well watered and beautiful.

"It is a good place, my son," said Terah. "I am old and very weary of this long journey. May it not be that we shall find the God of whom you dream here as well as in another place?"

"If it is your wish, my father, we will rest here. The storms of winter are not far off. Up yonder valley I see a cooling shade and wide meadows. There we will pitch our tents.[1] There we will build an altar and worship with sacrifice the true God." Lifting his strong arms he thrust his staff into the earth.

At this signal the caravan halted. Under the shade of a great oak tree they pitched Abram's tent. In its place in the corner they set the lamp which

[1] **Property rights.** The nomad tribes were permitted to pitch their tents wherever they liked outside the city's walls. They paid no rent but sometimes had to defend themselves against other tribes who wished to take their camping place away from them.

burned night and day. They spread the floor with rugs.[2] They hung the camel saddles and furnishings upon the walls. They spread the pallet beds and helped poor, old Terah to lie down upon one of them. Then they brought him lamb's broth and lentils stewed in milk.

They were all very happy over the prospect of a long rest. That night the women whispered among themselves of how, when the cold rains should be past, they would plant their seeds and tend their gardens.[3] "Let the men hunt," they said proudly. "Let them care for the herds or fight our enemies. We will make this a beautiful and fruitful place."

So they lived happily for a long time. Their flocks grew larger and finer. Passing caravans supplied them with many things which they would not, otherwise, have had, woven and finely dyed silks, spices and ointments for medicines,[4] new tools and better instruments of warfare, while they gave in return of their wool, their cunningly wrought ornaments of gold and silver and bronze,[5] and their valuable camels. Once even, they bought from passing warlike tribes, women and boys.

[2] **Rugs.** Their rugs were sheepskins or rugs woven out of grasses or camel's hair, or finer rugs bought from passing caravans.

[3] **Gardens.** When the caravan stopped for a long time in one place the women cultivated the soil. They used digging sticks to stir the earth. They raised lettuce, radishes, onions, beans, lentils, cauliflower, cabbage, carrots, and beets. The seeds they carefully saved and carried from place to place. Sometimes when they found a new root they planted it. In larger fields they raised wheat, rye, and barley to feed their cattle and to make bread for themselves. The men could not help much in cultivating the soil because they had to care for the herds, hunt and fight.

[4] **Silks, spices and ointments.** These came from Babylonia and farther east.

Embroidered cloaks. For centuries Babylonia had been the home of weavers and embroiderers whose fabrics were famous all over the east.

[5] **Ornaments.** Bracelets, anklets, earrings, chains, finger and nose rings of gold, silver and bronze.

These became members of the clan, even though they were held as slaves.[6]

But a time came when from the master's tent was heard a sound of weeping. Abram sat by his dead fire in torn clothing and stooping, threw the ashes over his head and wept. With faces covered by their dark veils the women mourned aloud, lifting their voices in a howling chant called the death chant.

On his narrow pallet Terah lay dead. Two hundred and five years he had lived. Now they carried his body and laid it in a cleft in the rocks and walled it in with stones, that wild beasts might not devour it.

For many days the mourners went about the camp weeping.[7] Poor Abram! How could he know the meaning of death?

"Let every one bring here a stone," he said. "We will build an altar that we may worship our God."[8] So they brought each a stone and made a pile. Then Abram took a lamb and separating the meat from the fat burned the fat upon the altar.[9] They all believed that in some mysterious fashion the sweet odor of the burning fat was acceptable to God and that he would understand and forgive them their sins.

Then Abram walked alone at night and seemed to hear God saying, "Get thee on the march again to a fair and beautiful country which I will give to thee and where I will make of thee a rich and powerful Nation."

[6] After a period of years the slaves might be set free.

[7] **Mourning.** The period of mourning lasted thirty days. They rent their clothing, fasted, allowed the fires to die out, shaved their heads and chanted dirges in memory of the dead.

[8] **The altar.** The altar might consist of a number of small stones piled one above the other, or be one straight shaft. God was worshipped on these altars by means of sacrifice, *i.e.*, burnt offerings or anointing with oil or by water. They believed that the stones became the dwelling places of beneficent spirits.

[9] **Priest.** The chief was also the high priest.

And Abram thought sadly, "How can this be when I have no son of my own?" But he obeyed the voice and started again upon his travels.

Related Work. Locate Haran on a map, and trace the journey of Abram from Ur to Haran.

ABRAM AND SARAI GET NEW NAMES

When Abram left Haran to resume his journey after the death of Terah, he did not go farther north but rather west, and making a great curve, was soon travelling southward.[1] On and on he went slowly, travelling for two or three days and resting many days wherever the grass and water were plentiful, until at last he came to the land of Canaan. In Canaan he found a place near Bethel that pleased him and he dwelt there many years.

One night while all the people of the caravan slept, Abram could not sleep but walked alone before his tent and thought about God. And as he walked in the cooling quiet of the night and watched the mysterious stars so far away, he seemed to hear God's voice again speaking to him. And he fell on his face in the sand and waited to hear what God should say to him.

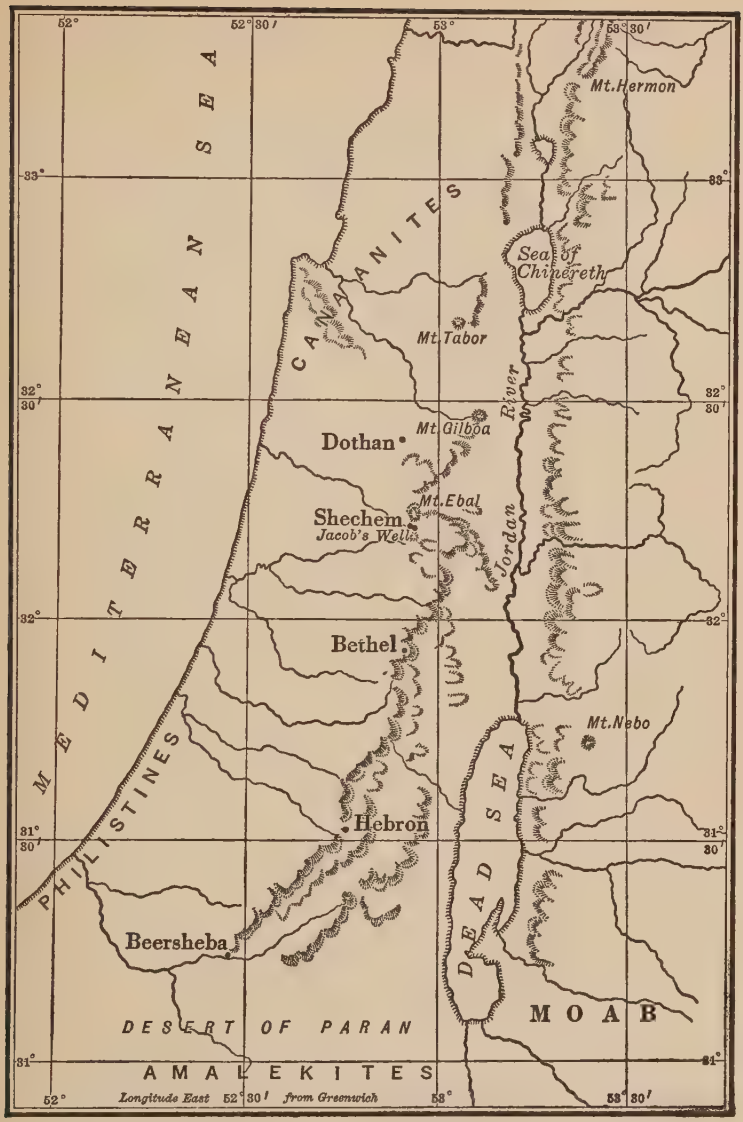
And the voice said, "Abram!"

And he said, "Here am I."

And God said, "I am the Almighty God. Walk before me and be perfect. My covenant is with thee and thou shalt be the father of many Nations. And thy name shall be no more Abram but Abraham, the father of a multitude."

Very still Abram remained, with his face hidden in the sand; for he dared not look at God.

[1] **Show on the map the probable caravan route to Canaan. Locate Bethel.**



The Land of Canaan in the Days of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

And the voice continued, "As for Sarai, thy wife, thou shalt not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. And I will bless her and give her a son of thee. She shall be a mother of Nations; kings of people shall be of her."

Then the awful voice ceased and Abraham, lying face downward upon the sand, laughed to himself, thinking, "I am old, so old, and Sarah is old. Shall we then have a son? It is impossible. I cannot believe it. Yet God has given us new names. Perhaps with the new names new and different things will come to pass.[2] At least I shall be true to God in every way I know. Who knows what will happen?"

Then very soon he had other proof of God's meaning.

As he sat by his tent in the heat of the day and looked out over the shining plains he saw three men coming. And he ran to meet them and he bowed down before them and said, "If now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away from thy servant. Let a little water be fetched and wash your feet and rest yourselves under the tree. And I will fetch a morsel of bread and comfort ye your hearts. After that ye shall pass on." [3]

And they sat down under the shade of the trees, the three men, dressed all in shining white, and a servant brought cool water and removed their sandals and poured the water over their feet and dried them with towels. And while this was being done, Abraham ran and called

[2] The people at this time believed that a new name meant in some sense a new personality or new capacities. Abraham means father of a multitude. Sarah means princess.

[3] **Laws of hospitality.** The people of the desert bound themselves to certain definite laws concerning the entertainment of strangers. They were very hospitable. The guest was greeted and urged to remain. Servants removed his sandals and washed his feet to remove the sand of the desert. The best food was offered to him and the host himself served the food standing, placing with his own hands the first morsel in his guest's mouth. If a passing stranger would not stop and eat, he was looked on with suspicion.

Sarah and said, "Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal. Knead it and bake it upon the hearth.[4]

Then he ran to the herd and selected a calf, tender and fat, and gave it to a servant to dress. And when it was done, he took butter and milk and the fine, sweet bread Sarah had baked and the freshly roasted calf's meat and set them before the strangers and stood by while they ate.

And when they had eaten and refreshed themselves, they said to him, "Where is Sarah, thy wife?"

And he said, "She is within the tent." And truly Sarah stood behind the tent flap listening to what the strangers had to say.

And one of the strangers said, "In return for thy kindness I will give thee a great gift. Sarah, thy wife, shall have a son."

Then Sarah laughed out loud because she knew she was old and Abraham was old.

But the stranger heard and said, "Why do you laugh? Is anything too hard for God to do?"

Then Sarah was ashamed that she had doubted, for she and Abraham now saw in the three strangers, three angels who had brought them a promise from God.

A SON IS BORN

"RUN, little Tilith, run to the well and bring water. There is so much to be done and it is even now high noon."

"Why, Mother?" said the little, brown boy, lifting his arms for the water jar,[1] "Why should I run so fast?"

"Why, that the feast shall be ready by evening. See!

[4] **Hearth.** Probably a flat stone kept in the tent, upon which a fire was built. This heated the stone sufficiently for baking.

[1] **Water jar.** The water jar, as distinguished from the water bottle, was made of unglazed clay, or bronze, with handles. It was carried on the shoulder or head.

It is noon and the cakes are not baking nor the ovens heated. Hasten, little snail."

When little Tilith returned with the dripping water jar he said, "There were so many at the well and I had to wait my turn.[2] Why do we feast to-night, Mother?"

"It is because a little son has been born in the tent of our Chief, although he is old and had long ago given up hope of a son. But now he comes. Early this morning, while you were yet asleep, almost before the lambs were awake, we heard a little crying voice from the tent of the master. 'Ya-aaa. Ya-aaa,' it cried, like a little lost lamb. We who have little ones of our own knew what it meant. A tiny, new life had begun."

"Did you see the baby, Mother?"

"Yes, my Tilith. Soon the flap of the master's great tent was lifted wide and our Chief, Abraham, stood there in the morning sunlight, holding in his arms his precious babe. His face shone with a great light of happiness. He lifted the child high in his arms and called out so that all might hear, 'God lives. He hath redeemed His promise to His servant, Abraham. Look ye all upon Isaac, my son, who by God's unchanging vow shall become the father of a great Nation.' "

"Was he then so beautiful, Mother?"

"He was a little, pink creature with tight shut eyes that feared the light. I looked earnestly upon him. 'And yet,' I said to myself softly, 'who can tell? The ways of God are not the ways of men.' "

[2] **Wells.** The wells of the country were dug where springs were known to be. They were enlarged and walled, then covered by flat stones to keep out the sand and dirt. Water was drawn by means of skin or earthenware bottles or pitchers, let down by leather ropes. A great trough of wood or stone stood by the wells that the flocks might be watered. Abram dug many wells and gave each well a name, *e.g.*, Beer sheba, the well of the oath. Gen. 21, 31.

There is a song of the well found in Numbers 21, 17th verse:

"Spring up, O well: sing ye unto it."

"But the feast, Mother? You spoke of a good time. Are the children bidden to the feast?"[3]

"Oh my Tilith, my curious one! Of a surety all are bidden to the feast. But if all the women loiter as do I there will be no feast. There is so much to be done. Run now. Help your sister with the churning. Jump up and down upon the churning skins with your strong, bare feet. Send Deborah to help me with the baking."

Soon the whole encampment was humming with eager, happy voices. People ran here and there. Great fires were lit and kept burning that there might be beds of coals to roast the meat. Above the happy voices could be heard the sound of the grinding stone and the fragrant meal was being mixed with water and baked on the hot stones of the earthen oven. Great skins of rich milk were cooling in the shade. Nothing was too good to use to celebrate this feast of the birth of Isaac.

When at last the shepherds brought the flocks in and shut them into the folds for the night, when the sun was setting and the swift, desert darkness was near, Abraham came out of his tent and stood among his people. He wore a white robe that fell almost to his feet, bound at the waist by a broad, silken girdle of blue. On his feet were leather sandals and on his head a white turban bound over the temples by a scarlet band. His hair and beard were as white as snow, for he was an old, old man. But he walked proudly and his dark eyes shone with joy.

"Let the torches be lighted,"[4] he cried.

[3] **Feasts.** The people feasted as a sign of rejoicing at the time of births, marriages or religious celebrations, *e.g.,* the feast of the Passover, the feast of Booths, etc. The feast meant especially prepared food, worship in the form of sacrifice, music, dancing and merry-making in general.

[4] **Torches.** Torches were made of the dried wood of the cedar or tamarack trees, which were rich in pitch. They were held in the hand or thrust into trees or bound to the tent posts.

And out through the gathering darkness a hundred blazing torches flamed.

"Fetch hither the lamb for the sacrifice. It is meet that we worship that God who has fulfilled his vow. We will sacrifice to Him."

Then Abraham lit the fire upon the altar and laid upon it the fat of the lamb, spotless and without blemish. The smoke of its burning ascended straight upward and all the people watched in silence.

"It is acceptable unto God," said Abraham. "Eat now and make merry. Are ye not my people? Unto you is born to-day a leader who will be greater than I have ever been; one to whom kings shall bow. Have we not God's promise that through him we shall all be blessed? Rejoice with me. My son, my Isaac, sleeps upon his mother's breast."

Related Work. Make a map for the booklets showing Abraham's journey from Ur to Haran and from Haran to Bethel.

Water jars of clay or plasticene with handles as described in the story may be made.

A feast may be dramatized as here described if the children wish it.

THE SACRIFICE

"FATHER," said little Isaac, "why do the lambs cry so, baa-aa?"

"They are little and helpless, my son. They are hungry and think only of the warm, sweet milk their mothers give them."

"It is foolish of them to cry," said Isaac.

"Give me then your cup of milk," said Abraham, reaching for Isaac's cup.

But Isaac clasped both hands about his cup and laughed so that his white teeth gleamed and his curls fell forward over his rosy cheeks. "I do not stand cry-

ing, baaa-a, but drink my milk—so—" and he dipped his rosy lips into the white foam.

"Yes, yes," said Abraham. "But your cup does not run away from you, else might you cry like the lambs. Run now and play. I must think awhile."

"Father," said the little boy, coming close and leaning against his father's arm, "why must you think and be sad? Come, play with me. See, the sun shines. I have built a wall in the sand behind which I will hide and be the robber chief. You may drive me away."

"No, no. Not to-day, little one. My heart is heavy within me."

When Isaac had gone away poor Abraham sat beside his tent with his head bowed in his hands. He was fighting with his own heart a grim, losing battle. It seemed now to Abraham that it had become his duty to offer Isaac, as the first-born son, a sacrifice to God, and it was hard for him even to think of such a thing. He loved his little boy so much. But it was a belief among the people that the first born of man or beast belonged to God. Now here was Isaac, his first born. Did God take into account not only that he was first born but that he was an only child?

"My only little one," mourned Abraham, "born when his mother and father are old and feeble. If I sacrifice him how shall God's promises be fulfilled and we become a great race? Yet it is surely the law that the first born belongs to God."[1]

Long and earnestly Abraham thought and prayed that he might be given strength to do what was right.

At last, while Isaac was still a little lad his father said

[1] **Sacrifice.** The idea that the firstborn belonged to God gave rise to a custom of sacrifice, old even in Abraham's time, and had for its purpose the propitiation of the gods who ruled the elements—storm, rain, sun, earth, etc. The idea has survived in greater or less degree through the ages. Jesus was spoken of as "the lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world."

to him, "To-morrow, Isaac, you and I will go on a long journey together."

Isaac jumped up and down and clapped his hands. "A journey, Father? How fine! Shall we ride or walk?"

"We will take Shamro, the brown donkey. Two servants will go with us. We will take turns, you and I, riding."

Though Abraham spoke lightly he did not smile. Little Isaac, looking up into his father's serious face, said, "Is it a sad journey, Father? May I take Kep, my hunting dog? There are foxes on the mountain. Kep would love to chase a fox."

"No," said Abraham. "Not Kep this time. We go on a journey to offer sacrifice. See, here is the wood."

So they started very early in the morning. Isaac kissed his mother good-bye and said, "We will soon be back, Mother. Do not grieve. And do not let the shepherd dogs torment Kep."

"No, no," said Sarah. "I will take care of Kep. Only see you to it that you come back to me soon." Sarah looked anxiously at Abraham. She was worried and unhappy. What was the meaning of this strange journey? Abraham was silent, grave almost unto tears. In his girdle he thrust his great, sharp knife. She dared not question him. She could only watch them out of sight through blinding tears. In the distance she could see the barren, misty mountains toward which they travelled. For a long time she could see the little group, father, son and two servants, with the little brown donkey, carrying the camp things. Then they were gone and Sarah sat alone in her little tent, her face covered by her black veil to hide her tears.

When Abraham and Isaac had travelled for three days they came to a place where they paused and Abraham said to his servants, "Abide ye here with the don-

Leinweber

Abraham and Isaac Going Up the Mountain to the Sacrifice

By Courtesy Messenger Pub. Co.

key. And I and the lad will go yonder and worship and come again to you. You, Isaac, shall carry the wood, for the mountain top is barren. I will carry the fire in this brazen pot and the knife also will I bear."[2]

And Isaac said, "My Father, here is the wood and the fire; but where is the lamb for the offering?"

"God will provide himself a lamb," answered Abraham.

So they walked on toward the top of the mountain. They could say little, for the mountain was steep. It took all their breath for the climbing.

Soon they came to a place where Abraham said, "Here we shall build our altar. Bring stones for the altar."

When the altar was finished Isaac laid on it the wood they had carried. The pot of burning coals was set beside the wood. Isaac looked again wonderingly at his father.

"I see not the lamb, Father," he said.

Then Abraham, throwing his arms about Isaac, bound him with a cord and lifted him upon the altar and, in an agony of fear, drew forth his knife to slay his son.

But as he stood there hesitating, he seemed to hear a gentle, kind voice, "Abraham, Abraham."

And he answered, "Here am I."

"Lay not thy hand upon the lad, for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from Me."

Poor Abraham, listening to the voice, could not reply, but, on looking up, he saw a ram caught by his horns in a nearby thicket. One swift stroke of the sharp knife cut the cords that held Isaac and lifting him from the altar Abraham said, "God has provided a ram for the offering, little son." Then he ran swiftly to the ram

[2] **Fire and knife.** Fire was carried from place to place in a metal pot with a bail, being fed from time to time with sticks. The knife was probably of bronze, *i.e.,* a mixture of brass and tin.

and killed it. Soon the fire was kindled and the smoke of the burning fat ascended towards the sky, a sweet incense to the God Abraham served, the symbol of a loving, obedient heart.

Isaac was very quiet as he watched the sacrifice. He dared not ask the meaning of it all, but he knew from the loving voice of his father and the tender clasp of his strong, old arms that he was well loved.

But Abraham felt, as he had never felt before, the love and guidance of God. He seemed to hear the same great voice saying, "Because thou hast done this thing and hast not withheld thy son from me, in blessing will I bless thee and in multiplying will I multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven and as the sands of the sea. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed because thou hast obeyed my voice."

Very soon they were at home. On the way Abraham tried to tell little Isaac about the meaning of their journey, but Isaac was still too young to understand. It was enough for him that his father loved him and that his mother greeted him with kisses.

SARAH IS DEAD

Upon the narrow bed, piled high with rugs and cushions, under the shelter of her low, black tent, Sarah lay sleeping.

At midday Isaac crept to the door of the tent and looked in silently. The nurse motioned for him to enter and silently still, the boy, lifting the curtains, stole to his mother's side.

"She wakes often and calls for you," whispered the nurse.

Though the words were hardly audible, the great, dark

eyes of the mother opened and she whispered, "Isaac. My Isaac."

"I am here, Mother," said Isaac, tenderly, kneeling beside her.

"Thy father? Where is he?"

"I am here, my Sarah," said Abraham from the shadows where he knelt. "How is it with thee? Drink but a little of this sweet wine. It will strengthen thee."

"Lift me," said Sarah. "Spread wide the curtains of the tent. Is it night that it is so dark?"

"Nay, but the sun shineth in all his splendor," cried Isaac. "See! Away in the distance lie the purple hills and over them float the small, white clouds. The sheep feed by the river. Hearest thou not their silvery bells and the cries of the young lambs?"

"It is a fair world," sighed Sarah. "I have loved it well. Put thy arms around me, Isaac. I would rest my head against thy bosom. Long, long years did I wait for thee. But thou came at last like a flower in winter. Abram! Abram—Go not from me. Go not."

"I am here, close by thee, beloved. I have fast hold of thy hand."

"I seemed to lose thee. It is growing dark, but I fear not with those I love near me. Dost thou remember the river near the garden in Ur, Abram, and my father's house with the tiny images? Ah, so long, long ago. I hear the river. It is swift and strong. It bears me away. Isaac—Abram! . . . It bears——"

"Mother! Mother!" cried Isaac. But Sarah does not answer. Abraham has fallen forward, his long, white hair and beard hiding his face . . From outside come the first long, shrill cries of the mourners—they had been waiting. Sarah is dead.

The camp fires go out. The people fast and pray. They tear their garments and mourn aloud.

"I am a stranger in a strange land," cried Abraham. "Where now shall I lay my dead?"

And they who dwelt in the land, out of the kindness of their hearts, answered, "Thou art a Prince [1] among us. Thou hast but to speak and the best sepulchre [2] in the land shall be thine."

"It is true that I am a stranger in a strange land," said Abraham with sad dignity. "Allow me to bury my dead in the cave of Machpelah which belongeth to Ephron the son of Zohar. I will pay him what it is worth."

"It is thine, my Lord," cried Ephron. "Freely I give it to thee. Bury there thy dead."

And Abraham spoke to Eliezer,[3] "Fetch hither the scales [4] and a box of silver." [5] And before all the people he weighed out four hundred shekels of silver [6] and bade him give it to Ephron.

"And the field of Ephron, which is in Machpelah which was before Mamre the field and the cave which was therein and all the trees which were in the field, that were in the borders round about, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession before all the children of Heth." [7]

[1] **As a Prince.** Not an actual prince, but as one to whom the honors of a prince were shown because of his great riches.

[2] **Sepulchre.** A tomb. Either a cave walled shut or a cleft in the rocks so narrow that a body let down into it would be safe from devouring wild beasts.

[3] **Eliezer.** Probably a Hebrew slave who was trusted because of long and faithful service with the conduct of all his master's business.

[4] **Scales.** Bronze weight and balance.

[5] **Silver** probably in small wedge-shaped pieces. One shekel was equal to sixty-four cents of our money.

[6] Four hundred shekels was the equivalent of two hundred and fifty-six dollars in our money.

[7] **Exchange of property.** Ownership and the keeping of records are implied here. We are led to understand that while there was no written bill of sale, all the people present were considered witnesses in the mouth of any two of whom at any time afterward the deed done that day could be proved. That constituted a legal contract in those times.

There, in the clean, rock cave they buried Sarah. There she lies even to-day, "a stranger in a strange land." [8]

ISAAC AND REBECCA

It was very lonely in the great tent after Sarah died. Abraham and Isaac lived together and did all they could to make each other happy, but there were many times when they were both very sad.

One night as they sat alone and very quiet Isaac, who was quite old enough to be thinking of such things, for he was now about forty years old, said, "Father!"

"Yes, my son," said Abraham, who was very old and feeble.

"Father, should there not be a mistress for this great place? Some one to look after things and see to thy comfort and—" We cannot know just what Isaac had in mind to say further, for Abraham laughed and said.

"Yes, yes, my son. My comfort, to be sure. I am not well just now, but I have many good years of life in me yet. But you are young. You want a wife. Is that it?"

Poor Isaac looked very uncomfortable and could only say dutifully, "If it please you, my father."

"Isaac," said Abraham earnestly, "I have long dreamed and prayed that when you married it might be to a girl of your own kindred,[1] not to one of these stranger women. The women of our land[2] are beautiful

[8] The tomb of Abraham and Sarah is sacredly kept to-day by the Mohammedans, who also revere Abraham as one of the early founders of their religion.

[1] A Hebrew clan intermarried with other branches of their own stock and by that means have been able to maintain their racial purity.

[2] Our land. By this term Abraham meant Padan Aram, the Hebrew for Haran. It is interesting to note that he did not refer to Ur as his native land.

and good. Let me send and get you a wife from among them."

"Why not let me, too, go along and choose for myself?" [3] said Isaac.

"No, no. That would not be wise. I cannot spare you. Let me send Eliezer, the chief steward. We will bind him by solemn oath to bring you back a lovely, young bride. You are young and heedless, but he is old and wise."

Isaac shook his head as though but half-convinced, but he said no more.

"Send then for Eliezer," continued Abraham. "I will explain the matter to him."

When the servant came Abraham said, "I am an old, old man, Eliezer. It is almost time for me to die, and there is something very important that must be done before I go. You are my chief steward, my trusted servant who knows all my business. I believe I can trust you to do this last important thing for me."

"My life is in thy hands, my lord. Command me."

"Place then your hand under my thigh.[4] Swear now by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you will go to my country and my kindred and find a young and beautiful bride for my son, Isaac."

And Eliezer placed his hand under his master's thigh and swore by the God of heaven and the God of earth to do as Abraham wished. But he added doubtfully,

"Suppose the young woman will not be willing to follow me into a strange country to marry a strange young man. Shall I then take Isaac back to the country from which you came?"

[3] It was the custom for the father to select a wife for his son, though sometimes, as in the case of Jacob, who came later, the young man selected his own wife.

[4] Placing the hand under the thigh. A practice which added solemnity to a vow, as we to-day kiss the Bible or hold up the right hand in taking an oath.

Then Abraham grew excited and even more earnest and exclaimed, "Never, never must that be done! The God who has helped and directed me and promised to give me this country for my own, He will also guide and help you. He will send an angel to guide you.[5] But if by any chance the young woman you select should refuse to come with you, then I release you from this oath."

This was a long speech for poor old Abraham and it left him quite breathless.

"Yes, yes, Master," said Eliezer, soothingly. "Have I not sworn?"

"Take what you will of gold and beautiful gifts. Let them know that my son is a rich man. Lose no time: for now that we are entered upon this important business we must see it to a successful issue."

So Eliezer took ten fine camels [6] and loaded them with many beautiful gifts, rings and bracelets and earrings and lovely silks and embroidered linens and gold and silver, and went swiftly northward toward Haran where Nahor, Abraham's brother, still dwelt. The road, which had seemed long to the caravan, was soon covered by the swift camels, so that on the evening of the fourth day Eliezer came to the gates of Haran. Here he paused: for he was greatly troubled to know just how to find the right wife for his young master.

"Let me see," he said softly. "She must be first, of my old master's kindred: but she must also be young and beautiful and above all, kind and unselfish. How can I be sure of all these things? I can do no better than to pray about it."

So Eliezer made his camels to kneel down outside the

[5] **Angel guidance.** An ancient belief in the presence and influence of good and evil spirits which persists among many people even to-day.

[6] **Camels.** These were their most valued possession. That Eliezer took ten camels was in itself a proof of wealth.

city's gates near to the wells where the young women came to draw water: and he stood [7] and said, "O Lord, God of my master, Abraham, I pray thee send me good speed this day and show kindness to my master, Abraham. Let it come to pass that the damsel to whom I shall say, 'Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink,' and she shall say, 'Drink and I will give thy camels drink also,' let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac."

Old Eliezer, servant though he was, knew that only a good, kind-hearted girl would offer to draw water enough for ten thirsty camels. Drawing water was very hard work indeed.

But no sooner had he finished praying, than he saw coming towards him a very beautiful young girl, carrying an earthen water jar on her shoulder and singing as she came. She was slender and graceful, with long, dark, curling hair and soft, dark eyes. She wore a blue dress,[8] girdled at the waist by a scarlet sash; but her feet and arms were bare and brown.

When the old servant saw her coming he ran forward and said quickly, "I pray you, let me drink a little water from your pitcher."

Perhaps the young girl wondered why the old man did not draw water for himself. If so, she said nothing, but smiled and answered kindly, "Drink, my lord, and I will draw water for your camels also."

Poor old Eliezer was amazed and delighted. So, when she had drawn water for his camels and they had drunk their fill he drew from his bag a golden earring and two golden bracelets and said,

"Accept these for your great kindness to a weary, old

[7] These clansmen either stood or fell forward upon their faces to pray.
[8] Rachel's dress. A square of wool or linen, drawn over the shoulders and held in place by a girdle. Blue was the favorite color.

man. Tell me, whose daughter are you? Is there room in your father's house for us to lodge?"

"I am Rebecca," said the young girl modestly, "the daughter of Bethuel, son of Nahor."

O how wonderful it seemed to Eliezer that he should have found his master's brother at once and so easily, and he said,

"I am Eliezer, servant of your father's brother, Abraham. Marvelous are the ways of God. Past finding out is His wisdom."

Now Rebecca ran ahead to her home, leaving Eliezer to follow as best he could. She was too much excited to be polite but ran, dancing and laughing, to her mother and cried,

"He is come, mother! The prince has sent his servant for me. See the lovely bracelets? See the earring?"

Her mother was so amazed she could say nothing; but her brother, Laban, cried,

"What is all this, Rebecca? A prince? Those lovely, golden bracelets?"

Then Rebecca found breath and words to tell them the wonderful story; how an old man had asked her for a drink of water; how she had drawn water for his camels and he had given her the bracelet; how even now he might be on his way to their home to stay all night.

"Can it be," said Laban, "that you have left this stranger, this emissary of our rich kinsman, to wait outside the city's gates alone? Foolish girl! I will go and show him the way home."

Very soon Eliezer, led by Laban, stood within the court; but when they urged him to eat and rest he said,

"I will not eat until I have told my story. My master, Abraham, is rich and great"—and so on and on, telling of Isaac waiting for his bride, of the oath which

Abraham made him swear, of all that had happened to him, and coming to the point at last.

"And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me, and if not, tell me that I may turn to the right hand or the left."

And Bethuel and Laban said, "Behold, Rebecca is before you. Take her and go and let her be thy master's son's wife as the Lord hath spoken."

And Eliezer brought forth jewels and fine raiment and gave them to Rebecca and her mother. And they ate and drank and made merry, and Eliezer rested after his long journey.

To Isaac, waiting at home, the time that Eliezer was gone seemed long and dreary. He walked alone in the fields and thought of his bride to be; of how she would be beautiful and kind and loving like his mother. And as he walked one evening and looked far out over the plains he saw a train of camels coming. His heart gave a great throb.

"It is Eliezer coming," he thought. "Can he have brought her at last?"

He had not long to wait; for very soon he saw the camels halted; saw one of them kneel and from it descend a maiden; and though her face was veiled,[9] Isaac knew her to be beautiful. She came and stood before him, not speaking. Isaac put out his hand and lifted the veil and looked upon the beautiful Rebecca.

But it was Eliezer who told him all that had happened.

Then came music upon the harp and tabret,[10] and dancing and feasting, and at the close of the feast Isaac led Rebecca to his mother's tent and she became his wife

[9] The women sometimes wore veils, but they usually covered the hair only.

[10] **Music.** The Hebrews were a musical people. The harp was a simple stringed instrument, the tabret like our tambourine.

and he loved her.[11] And Isaac was comforted after the death of his mother.

Related Work. Trace upon the map the route of Eliezer from Bethel to Haran and his return to Bethel with Rebecca.

The simple marriage ceremony of Isaac and Rebecca may be dramatized, giving especial attention to the music and dancing of the processional.

ABRAHAM IS LAID BESIDE SARAH

"SEE you yonder blue mountain peak, my Isaac?" said Abraham.

"Aye, father," answered Isaac from his seat by the hearth where Rebecca knelt beside him.

The swaying curtains of the great tent had been lifted and tied back and the three were sitting there in the cool of the evening enjoying the glow of color in the sky as the sun sank behind the distant hills.

"All of the land which lies between here and yonder distant mountain, which is as a jewel reflecting the changing colors of the heavens, shall be yours when I am gone." [1]

"Speak not of your going, father," said Isaac. "You are yet strong though you are full of years."

"The time cannot be far distant. I have lived long and happily. Now I shall give place to others, who shall live to see God's promises fulfilled. Out of you, my

[11] **The marriage ceremony.** A procession of singing, dancing girls led the heavily veiled bride to the door of the man's tent. There he publicly received her. This constituted a legal marriage. One man might have many wives, ranging all the way in importance and influence from the concubine, who had no legal rights, to the favorite wife, who because of the love borne towards her, enjoyed many privileges. The man could secure a divorce for slight causes but the woman could not get a divorce.

[1] **Ownership of land.** Abraham meant that Isaac had the privilege or right to graze his flocks over so much land.

children, shall spring a great race, countless as these slow appearing stars above us, and as deathless. While I was yet a child in that far city of Ur among the abominations of idolatry, God spoke to me. Long, long have I travelled; earnestly have I striven to seek out that God, to learn His will and obey it. In much have I failed."

"Nay, nay, father. Say not so," murmured Isaac.

"Now must I die. Nay, answer not. It is not all sadly that I go. You will unseal yonder rocky tomb [2] and lay this poor body beside her who waits its coming. Yet the spirit of man dies not. We come and go but the spirit of man is as the breath of God." [3]

There was silence in the shadows of the tent. The little fire flickered and sank into ashes. Overhead the stars shone in jewelled splendor. A restless little wind went sighing through the oak trees.

"On such a night as this," said Abraham, " I hear far voices calling. I see in fancy great crowds of people. They go in and out, at work, at the hunt, at warfare. Among them are the faces of our kinsmen, dark and keen. They take their places among the great ones of the earth. They create. They suffer. They die. But they keep alive in their hearts a faith in God, in that great, spirit God of whom I have dreamed. They shall go on and on. Who knoweth the end? His wisdom is past finding out." [4]

Then after a little he went on, "To you, Isaac, I leave all that I have. My other people I have sent away to a far eastern country that you may be master of all.[5] You

[2] The cave of Machpelah, where Sarah was buried.

[3] Primitive peoples had a belief in the future life, as a dim, shadowy existence some place below or inside the earth.

[4] Such faith as Abraham's was the faith of rare individuals only. The people as a whole were far from monotheism.

[5] Abraham had other sons by a wife he had taken after Sarah's death. Ishmael, the son of Hagar, was also his son. The "far eastern land" to which he refers was probably Mesopotamia, beyond the Euphrates.

will be very rich. Eliezer can tell you just how rich and wherein your wealth lieth; how many flocks, what gold and silver, what stores of provender. Among your neighbors you shall be a prince. See to it that with all your wealth and power you are kind to your kinsmen, merciful to your servants and bondsmen, just in your dealings with your neighbors and true to God." The tired old voice ceased. Again they sat in silence.

"It is time that we all slept," said Isaac. "See, the moon comes to pale the light of the stars. Father, shall I not help you to your bed? Father!"

But Abraham did not answer. His white head fallen forward upon his bosom, his dark eyes open but unseeing, Abraham was gone on a last, long pilgrimage.

THE BLESSING

For a time after their father died Isaac and Rebecca were very sad and quiet, but after a while there came to them two little boys. Twins they were, and their mother called them Esau and Jacob.

But though they were twins, they did not look exactly alike as some twins do. Esau, who was a few moments older than his brother, Jacob, was very red and hairy, and that is why they called him Esau. But Jacob was beautiful and fair and strong, and at once his mother, seeing him so, loved him better. She felt very sad to think that Esau was the older of the two, for to the first-born child belonged the birthright, the right to inheritance of all his father's wealth.[1]

The two little boys grew fast while they played happily with their dogs in the warm shadow of the tent.

[1] **The birthright.** Not only the right to inheritance of the larger part of the wealth but supremacy in all things. Supremacy of the first-born is still conceded among many peoples.

"When I am a man," said little Esau proudly, "I shall be a great hunter. I shall sling my bow, so, across my shoulder. I shall draw the bow steadily, like this. I shall let go. Hurrah! I shall kill a deer. Now shall my father have the sweet venison that he loves so much."

When Isaac heard him talk like this he would catch the boy up in his strong arms and laugh. "Ho, ho! little boaster! And who will sharpen your arrow points for you or who will feed you after the long, weary chase?"

"Jacob shall share his pottage with me," said Esau.

But Jacob did not smile at this. He did not love to hunt. He loved to sit in the tent and talk to his friends. He loved to trade with passing caravans for he was a shrewd trader. He was a dreamer and a schemer.

One day when Esau had been hunting all day long he came in very, very tired and hungry. Jacob was sitting eating some pottage, which is lentils boiled into a paste. It looked very good to poor, hungry Esau, and he said to Jacob. "Please give me some of your pottage. I am so tired I could faint."

"If you will sell me your birthright I will give you some," said Jacob.

"What difference does the birthright make? I am nearly dead as it is. Have the birthright if you want it so much!"

"Will you swear to that?" said Jacob.

"I swear," said Esau. "Now give me a big bowl of that same red pottage, for I was never so hungry in my life."

Time passed on and Jacob and Esau were grown men. Their father, Isaac, was now old and almost blind and sat a great deal in his tent. One day he said, "I should like so much to have some venison broth. Where is Esau? Ask him to go and kill a deer and Rebecca shall

make me some broth and I will bless him before I die." [2]

Esau, who was lying in the shade of a great tree, leaped up and cried out,

"I will go quickly, father. You shall have the sweetest venison there can be found in the forest." He seized his bow and arrows and disappeared in the woods.

Then Rebecca, who had heard all this conversation, called to Jacob. She took him into her own tent and spoke softly so that Isaac could not hear and said,

"Go now to the flocks and fetch me two good kids and I will make savory meat for thy father such as he loveth, and you may take it to him and he will eat and bless you, thinking you to be Esau. Your brother has sold you his birthright. It is but just that you should have the blessing also."

"But," said Jacob thoughtfully, "my brother is a hairy man and I am smooth. Though my father cannot see, he will lay his hands on me and know that I am not Esau. Then will he curse [3] me rather than bless me."

"If he does that," said Rebecca, "I will take your curse upon myself. Only now hasten and obey me."

So Jacob ran and killed two kids and skinned them, and Rebecca made a savory stew out of them. Then she dressed Jacob in Esau's best clothes and drew the skin of the little kids over his hands and the smooth of his neck, and sent him in to Isaac with a bowl of the stew.

And his father heard him coming and he said, "Who are you?"

And Jacob said, "I am Esau, your first-born. Here is the savory meat. Sit and eat, I pray you, that your soul may bless me."

[2] The father's blessing belonged to the first-born son. It was considered very important.

[3] The curse that came from the lips of a father was a thing to be feared. It could not be recalled but its consequences could be voluntarily taken by another.

"You have been very quick, my son."

"God helped me," said Jacob.

"Come near me, please, that I may feel of you, that I may know that you are Esau."

Then Jacob knelt and the poor, trembling old hands were passed over his face and hands and arms.

"The hands are the hands of Esau but the voice is the voice of Jacob. Are you my very son Esau?"

And Jacob said, "I am."

"Bring me then the venison. I will eat and bless you."

And he brought it and Isaac ate and drank wine, and when he was done he said.

"Come now, my son, and kiss me." And Jacob stooped down and kissed him.

Poor, blind Isaac smelled the scent of Esau's clothing and liked it, for he said.

"The smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed. Therefore God give you of the dew of heaven and the fatness of earth and plenty of corn and wine. Let people serve you and nations bow down to you. Be lord over your brethren and let your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be every one who curses you and blessed be every one who blesses you."

Almost before Isaac had done speaking Esau came running in and not understanding it all at first glance, cried out,

"Come, father, here is the savory meat. Arise, eat, that your soul may bless me."

Then Isaac began to tremble, and he said, "Who are you?"

"Why, your first-born son, Esau!"

"Who," cried Isaac wildly, "where is he who brought me venison? And I have eaten of it and have blessed him. Yea, and he shall be blessed." [4]

[4] A blessing, once given, could not be revoked.

"Oh, Father! Father!" cried Esau, "Bless me, even me also."

"Your brother came with subtlety and has taken away your blessing."

"Oh, he is rightly named Jacob.[5] He took away my birthright and now he has taken my blessing. Have you but one blessing, my father?" And poor Esau sank upon the floor and wept bitterly.

"Weep not, Esau," said Isaac gently. "Come, kneel before me." He laid his hands on Esau's head.

"Behold your dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth and of the dew of heaven from above. By your sword shall you live and you shall serve your brother. It shall come to pass when you shall leave the dominion, you shall break his yoke from off your neck."[6]

"When my father is gone," thought Esau angrily, "I shall put the pretender to death."

But Rebecca heard of his angry threat and planned to send Jacob away until Esau's righteous anger against him should die out.

JACOB BARGAINS WITH GOD

"You see, mother," said Jacob angrily, "I have gotten the birthright of my brother and the blessing of my father, but what good will they do me if Esau is determined to kill me?"

"There is but one thing for you to do, my son," said Rebecca. "You must leave this country until Esau has forgotten his anger."

[5] Jacob. A pretender.

[6] Esau left Canaan and went to live in Edom, a desert-like country east of the Jordan River. Later he very generously forgave Jacob.

"That he will never do," said Jacob gloomily. "Neither will my father let me go."

"Leave it to me," said Rebecca wisely. "I have a plan."

So she went weeping into Isaac's tent.

"The tears are wet upon your cheeks, Rebecca," said blind Isaac. "What has saddened you?"

"Oh, I am aweary of my life because of these dreadful women about me. If Jacob should take a wife from among these women I might just as well die."

"Oh, that must never be," said Isaac.

"He is of an age to marry and some day he will bring to my tent one of these daughters of Heth. Oh, what shall we do?"

"Are there yet no beautiful women among our own people, Rebecca? Let the lad go to your brother, Laban, in Haran and find him a wife."

"I will send him to you," said Rebecca eagerly. "Do you tell him your plan and send him on his way with your blessing."

Then Rebecca ran back to Jacob, who had waited in his mother's tent.

"It is settled, Jacob," she cried, "happily settled. You start to-night for Haran to visit your uncle, Laban. Who knows," she added softly, "but you may find there a lovely wife, and when your brother's wrath is cooled we may all live happily together here in Canaan. Your father awaits you with his blessing. Go! I will prepare all that is necessary for your journey."

Then Jacob went to his father's tent and kneeling beside the blind old man said, "My mother sent me to you."

"Your mother fears for you, Jacob. We think it wise and best that you go away for a little while. Go then to Haran to visit your uncle Laban. Seek there your fortune and a wife, and God bless you as do I. May God

give the blessing of Abraham to you and to your seed, that you may inherit the land which God gave to Abraham!"

So Jacob, taking the packages his mother had prepared for him, and throwing around him his great, sheep-skin coat to keep him warm at night, kissed his mother and slipped away northward over the road his grandfather, Abraham, had travelled with his caravan and over which old Eliezer had travelled to seek out a wife for Isaac.

At first he travelled quickly and gaily, but soon night came and he sought out a safe place to sleep.

"Here in the open," thought Jacob, "where nothing can hide and spring out upon me, is a good place. I shall use these stones for a pillow."

So, wrapping his coat about him, he lay down. It was not very cold and the great stars in the blue arch of the heavens above him seemed very near. Looking up at them, Jacob soon slept, and while he slept he dreamed this dream.

Before him there seemed to rise up out of the earth a shining, golden ladder, so long that it ended among the glittering stars, a glorious stairway to heaven. And upon it there appeared angels, shining white and beautiful, going up and down. And at its head stood God himself, a glorious, mystic, majestic God. And Jacob, with his head on his hard pillow, heard God say,

"I am the Lord God of Abraham, thy father, and the God of Isaac. The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth. And thou shalt spread abroad to the east and to the west and to the north and south, and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And behold, I am with thee and will keep thee in all places, whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again to this land. For I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken unto thee."

Then Jacob awoke frightened and sat up, looking wildly about him.

"This is a dreadful place," he cried. "It is none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven."

And he rose up very early, while it was yet dark, and took the stones he had used for a pillow and set them up and poured oil upon them, and said,[1]

"This place shall be called Bethel. Hear me, O God of my fathers: If thou wilt be with me and will keep me in the way I go and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, so that I can come again to my father's house in peace, then shall ye be my God. And this stone which I have set for a pillar shall be God's house and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

Imagine Jacob, fleeing away in the misty, morning shadows, looking back fearfully to that holy place where he had dared to make a bargain with God!

Related Work. Trace Jacob's journey to Haran from Beersheba. After living for a number of years about Hebron, the Hebrews had gone to the south and west, dwelling at various places in the region of Gerar and Beersheba.

THE CHEATER CHEATED

So Jacob, journeying alone, came within sight of a well, perhaps that same well which his grandfather, Abraham, had dug and from which his mother, Rebecca, had drawn water for old Eliezer's camels, so long ago. He was by

[1] **Stone Worship.** The use of a stone or pillar as a supposed dwelling place of God was a survival of nature worship. In an earlier day the gods or spirits were believed to live within such stones or pillars and offerings were made to them. Later an altar of earth or stone was erected near them, and the pillar or stone became the symbol of the god rather than its dwelling place.

this time very footsore and weary, not so confident and bold as when he set out. His home and his mother seemed very far away.

Three or four shepherds with their flocks were waiting at the well, and to these he said,

"Where are you from?"

"We are from Haran," they answered.

"Do you know Laban, the son of Nahor?"

"Yes, we know him."

"Is he well?" said Jacob.

"Oh, yes, he is well. Here is his daughter, Rachel, now. Now we can water our sheep and be gone out of the way of the cattle."

And Jacob looked and saw Rachel. She seemed to him more beautiful than any other woman he had ever seen. She was tall and strong, but graceful, with long, fair curling hair falling softly over her shoulders, and tender, dark eyes. She wore a white blouse over a blue skirt, and the snowy sleeves, falling backward, showed her strong, brown arms with their golden bracelets. Golden rings were in her ears, too. She carried a shepherd's staff, for she guarded her father's sheep.

Jacob's homesick heart leaped for happiness at sight of her. He went running to meet her.

"Is it true," he said, "that you are my uncle Laban's daughter?"

"It is true that I am the daughter of Laban, but you I know not," said Rachel, smiling.

"I am Jacob, your kinsman, come to make you a visit. We are cousins, at least. Oh, I am glad to be here. I am glad to see you," and he kissed Rachel and the tears rolled down his cheeks.

"Let us water the sheep," said Rachel, "that these shepherds may be free to go away. Then I will run and tell my father, and he will make you welcome."

So Jacob lifted the great stone from the well and drew

water for Rachel's sheep, and when all the sheep had drunk they replaced the stone over the well's mouth. Then Rachel ran swiftly ahead to tell her father about Jacob.

"Oh, Father," she cried, "such a wonderful thing has happened! As I went to water the sheep a handsome, young man met me and claimed kinship with me. He says he is your sister Rebecca's eldest son, Jacob."

Laban waited to hear no more but ran out to meet Jacob. He threw his arms about him and kissed him.

"Welcome, kinsman," he cried. "Surely you are of my bone and flesh! Stay with us! We will be glad to have you."

So Jacob stayed and helped Rachel with the sheep.

One day after he had been there about a month Laban said, "There is no reason why you should work for me for nothing just because you are my kinsman. How can I pay you for your work?"

"Dear uncle," said Jacob, "I love Rachel and I will gladly serve you seven years if you will let her be my wife."

"I would much rather give her to you than to any other man," [1] said Laban.

So Jacob worked hard for his uncle for seven long years but such was his love for the beautiful Rachel that they seemed only a short time.

Then when the seven years were gone Laban made a great wedding feast with music and singing and dancing. There was a procession made up of beautiful young girls with flowers in their hair, who led a veiled figure up to Jacob's tent. It was dark and Jacob could not see; but he

[1] **Ownership of women.** The father had the right to dispose of his daughters as he saw fit. They were often sold to the highest bidder. As she became the mother of sons the woman gained in the estimation of her husband and the community in general. A woman among the Hebrews led on the whole a more desirable life than women among other primitive peoples.

thought the veiled figure was his lovely Rachel. In the presence of all the people he received her into his tent.

In the morning he discovered that he had married not Rachel, whom he loved, but Leah, Rachel's older sister.

Then Jacob went storming to Laban. "What is this?" he cried. "Did I not serve you for Rachel? Was not that our bargain? And now you have cheated me into marrying Leah! Why have you done so?"

But Laban was calm. He answered, "It is not the custom in our country that the younger shall marry before the elder sister. Work for me another seven years and you shall have Rachel also."

Poor Jacob! I wonder if he remembered his brother's bitter cry, "Bless me, too, O my father!"

At any rate he set himself resolutely to work and served Laban another seven years. At the end of that time Rachel became his wife. So happy were they together that Jacob forgave Laban and stayed on still another seven years, caring for the sheep,—seven happy, golden years, with children growing up about him and his flocks increasing. So Jacob came to be rich and strong.

STORIES OF JOSEPH

JOSEPH, THE BOY WHO WAS LOVED BEST

First one little ray of light and then another crept under the tent flap until the soft, dim light of early morning lay on every object within. It touched the eyelids of ten boys who lay sleeping there, not in cool, white beds but each wrapped in a woolen robe and lying on a sheepskin pallet, on the ground. They were dark, rosy boys with black hair and strong, sun-tanned arms and legs.

Drowsily Reuben, the oldest, sat up and rubbed the sleep from his black eyes. He was only a boy, not more than fifteen, but such a big, powerful fellow that when he thrust his brawny arms upward to yawn he looked as if he could grapple with a lion single-handed. As he sat there, blinking in the sunlight, the flap of the tent was thrown wide open and a hairy face was thrust inside.

"The Chief commands that all his sons shall appear before him."

The hairy one roared this out in so loud a voice that all the boys, big and little, sprang from their beds, wide awake at once. Dressing was a simple matter since each one wore but a single garment of striped cloth, girdled at the waist by a leather thong, and sandals, bound by a single strap. They did not stop for either washing or hair brushing but ran out into the sunshine, eager to know what their father could want of all of them so early in the morning.

They were the sons of Jacob.[1] In these days men had

[1] **The family.** We see family life beginning here to be more clearly developed. Jacob has become, not the chief of a clan as was Abraham, but the head of a family that will grow gradually to be a clan or tribe,

many wives, so that the children of one family were not always true brothers and sisters but children of one father and different mothers. It was so in this instance. Of the ten boys waiting their father Jacob's comamnd, six were sons of Leah. They were named Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Jacob and Issachar. Two were sons of Bilhah.[2] They were named Dan and Naphtali and two were sons of Zilpah.[3] They were named Gad and Asher. These ten boys had but one sister. She was Leah's child and was named Dinah. So you see their relationships were much confused and very intimate, but they all lived together as happily as they could.

While they are waiting before the tent of their father the whole encampment awakens into life. The sheep bleat and the cattle bawl while the big, red shepherd dogs dart in and out at their master's command, gathering the separate flocks together. One by one the shepherds leave for the distant hills, driving their flocks before them, the little lambs tagging after their mothers, getting their breakfasts as they run. Soon the camp was quiet and still the restless boys waited for their father to appear.

It was not from the great black chief's tent that he came at last but from the smaller tent of Rachel, his best loved wife. Two serving women followed him and lifting high the tent flaps fastened them securely to the corner stakes. They thus revealed the whole interior and the boys saw a beautiful sight. There, on a bed of cushions lay Rachel. Over her stooped Leah and lifted from beside her a tiny baby. This she placed in Jacob's arms as he stood so proudly in the open doorway. Holding the baby so that all could see it, he said.

and then divide into tribes in the true sense of that word. Jacob is a real patriarch or father.

[2] **Bilhah.** Leah's servant, a concubine, not a legal wife.

[3] **Zilpah.** Rachel's servant, likewise a concubine. The children of these women were considered legitimate children and shared equally in family rights of inheritance with the children of Leah and Rachel.

"This is your new brother, Joseph, the son of my beloved Rachel. Salute you brother, for he is beautiful. From this day forward he shall by my best-loved son." [4]

How all the other sons liked this idea I cannot tell, but at least they came gently in turn and looked at the tiny, pink boy asleep in his father's arms and some touched him lightly upon the roseleaf cheek, and Reuben bent down and kissed the baby's forehead.

Then the father said, "To-night when our people return from the fields there shall be a feast in honor of this day."

Until late that night, while the camp fires blazed under the quiet stars, there was music and dancing and feasting. But the tiny, newborn babe, Joseph, slept in his skin cradle.[5]

GOING HOME

When Joseph was about seven years old his father and mother decided to go and live near his grandfather, Isaac. It meant a long, long journey for they had no trains or automobiles as we have to-day.[1] They could ride on camels, but because they had to take their flocks with them they could travel only as fast as the sheep and cows could walk, only as fast, indeed, as the little lambs and calves could walk, which was very, very slowly. They

[4] **A favorite son.** The chief or patriarch had the right to select a favorite wife or a favorite son who would inherit more of the father's property than the other children. This favorite son was usually the first-born son of a favorite wife. Of course the custom caused bitter jealousy and strife in the family.

[5] **Cradle.** A hammock-like swing of skins fastened to stakes. A model of this cradle may be easily made.

[1] **Distance.** From the neighborhood of Padanaram, or Haran, to Hebron in Canaan was about two hundred or two hundred and fifty miles. But this difference marked a distinct change in climate. Haran, being farther north and nearer the mountains, was much colder than Hebron.

had no very good, straight roads, no bridges over the rivers and no sign-posts to point the way.

But Jacob dreamed a dream that made him think it was right, and even a duty, for them to go. He had been more than twenty years away from his father and mother and he was homesick. His father and mother had never seen any of the little grandchildren. They were longing and longing to hug and kiss them and give them goodies to eat.

So Jacob told Rachel and Leah and all his children and his servants that they were going on a long and interesting journey. I imagine they were all very happy to go because it meant meeting new and interesting people and seeing new things.

They decided not to tell their father, Laban, that they were going. They were afraid he would not want them to go and would try to make trouble for them. So one day, when he had gone away to be gone for some time, they called all their shepherds together with their sheep and goats and cows and gave each little flock into the care of a strong and careful man and started him on his way.

Each shepherd had a big, red dog to help him. Also he carried a strong oak staff, and a sling. Into the sling he fitted a stone or sharp pebble. He wrapped the long string around his hand but held the short string in his fingers. Then he placed a small stone in the leather part and swung his arm around and around. Then he suddenly let loose the short string, and the stone hit the fox or wolf or whatever it was that was after the sheep, and killed it. The sling was the shepherd's gun.

Each shepherd had a big woolen or camel's hair coat which kept him warm and dry. This he wore over his shoulder in the daytime; but at night he made a cover of it. In this coat was a pocket big enough to carry a little, weak lamb that could not keep up with the others. The

shepherds were strong, brave men, used to all kinds of weather and hardships, so they started off gaily with their flocks. The dogs barked and capered. They, too, were glad to go. The sheep called "Baa! Baa!" and the shepherds, in their big, ringing voices, sang a song like this:

Winds blow, Ho! Ho!
At night the stars will show.
Sun shine, Ho! Ho!
The sheep are mine.

Little Joseph watched the shepherds go. There was one big fellow, Zad was his name, who had often carried Joseph on his shoulders. It was heaps of fun and Joseph thought he might ride that way now, but his mother said that Zad would be too tired by night. She showed him Kedi, the big brown camel, who would carry them both and not be tired. Kedi lay chewing his cud as though he never meant to start.

"Ho, Kedi!" cried Joseph. But Kedi only flapped his stumpy tail.

After the shepherds and flocks were ready, the little donkeys were caught and loaded. Upon their little backs they carried all the tents and food. Bundles and baskets of all kinds were strapped on them. They looked very comical, so that Joseph laughed at them. They were so little and their loads looked so big! But they were sturdy fellows and very careful and wise. They set their little feet very firmly in the rocky road and, unless their loads slipped, they brought the tents and food and rugs and all that they carried safely to the camping places. They walked in a long procession, one behind the other. A man with a sharp stick ran beside them and shouted, "Hi! Hi! Go on!"

Then came the stately camels with high wood or leather saddles and wicker baskets, in which the people

rode.[2] The camel is called the ship of the desert because his long, swinging stride makes his rider sway as though he rode in a ship on the ocean.

Kedi was the biggest and finest of all the camels in Jacob's train. He was chosen therefore to carry Joseph and his mother. He had a silver bridle with a chain of little silver bells. When he walked the little bells went tinkle, tinkle, tink, tinkle, tinkle, tink, like the songs Joseph's mother sang when she wished him to go to sleep. It must have been very pleasant to ride up so high and so safe, cuddled up close to his mother but able to see over the heads of the sheep and the shepherds, the donkeys and their drivers, away out over the fields to the far off purple hills. The fields were full of flowers, wild roses and pansies and poppies. The birds sang, the skylark and the nightingale. Everything was beautiful. Joseph was very happy.

Last of all, and best of all, perhaps, Joseph thought, came Jacob, the father, mounted on a big, white camel, wearing the red robe that marked him master shepherd, and a white and red turban. His heavy black hair and beard fell round his neck. His dark eyes were keen and watchful. Always when he looked at Joseph and Rachel he showed his white teeth in a smile so kind that Joseph's little heart beat fast with love and pride. Jacob wore on his right hand a gold ring which was another sign that he was a master shepherd. He carried a heavy, oak staff. He was the commander of the caravan. They must one and all obey him. But he was very wise and just and they were fortunate to have him for a leader.

Joseph's favorite brother, Reuben, walked by his father's camel. Joseph loved him because he was gentle and quiet and told lovely stories of bears and tigers, of clouds and stars, of kings and princes. He and Joseph

[2] The camels were sometimes led or tied together in a line.

sometimes went hunting together, but more often they sat by the campfires and told stories.

Just before the caravan started, Rachel did something which she thought would be of additional help to keep them all safe and happy. She ran to get what were called the household images.[3] They were little carven figures, part animal, part man. Some had the body of a man and the head of a monkey. Some had the head of a dog. They were very ugly and absurd to look at, we would say; but some of the people believed the gods that they were named for had great power, and so they set them up in their houses and prayed before them. Rachel believed it would be a good thing to take them along, so she got them and put them in the basket saddle. She had been taught to pray before the poor, little wooden things as we believe in a good, Heavenly Father and pray to Him. But Jacob did not believe in them. Before he mounted his camel to start off on his long, dangerous journey, he lifted up his hands and prayed to the real God of all the world, who, though we cannot see Him or feel Him, loves us and guides us. Jacob prayed to this God. He asked to be taught how to serve this God. Then, because he had faith in God's goodness, he stepped up into the camel's saddle and gave the brave, loud word of command that started them all on that long journey.

Related Work. Trace on a map Jacob's route from Haran to Hebron. He went by way of Schechem where he sojourned for some time, and then on to Bethel.

Make a shepherd's staff and a sling, as these are described in the story.

Pictures for booklets or posters descriptive of the scenes here described, or miniature images for the figures of the caravan as described may be made.

[3] **Household images.** The kind that Abraham's father made in Ur. Many people still believed in them and prayed to them.

Oriental Vertical Flutes

A Harp Such as David Probably Used

Inset—Reproduction of an Egyptian Lyre

Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art

THE FIRST CAMPING PLACE

MANY times little Joseph fell asleep that first day of his journey. It was so warm and Kedi had no need to make haste, because his long legs would get over the ground much faster than the short legs of the sheep and lambs, so he did not shake and jostle his riders but carried them smoothly and easily.

The big, red sun was level in his eyes when, at a word of command from his father, Reuben lifted a little flute [1] to his lips and blew some long, soft notes like the soldier's taps. This was the signal for all to halt for the night.

At once the sheep and cows stopped walking and began to nibble at the grass. The tired little donkeys gave great sighs of relief as the heavy loads were lifted from their backs. I imagine some of them lay down in the dust and rolled over and over. Only the camels were calm. They knelt down so that their riders could get off. But they were not tired. Not they! They could go many days' journey without water and only a little food and still be strong and untired.

At first Joseph's legs felt very stiff and prickly, but he capered about and was so lively that he was in everybody's way. So his mother gave him something to do. In those times, as it is to-day, there was plenty of work for everybody. Every man and woman, every boy and girl, must help to make the family safe and warm and happy. If anybody forgot or put off doing his share, something dreadful was likely to happen.

But what was there that a little boy like Joseph could do?

[1] **Flute.** Or shepherd's pipe. The flute or pipe had numerous forms. An ingenious boy or girl may succeed in making pipes that will play.

Well, his mother gave him a little water jug and sent him down to the brook to carry water that they might all bathe and be refreshed after the heat of the journey. It was a pleasant task. Many times little Joseph emptied his little jar into the big one until it, too, was full. Of course he got wet and a little muddy, but that didn't matter much. He was helping. That was the best of all.

Everybody was busy, too, you may be sure, running a race with darkness. Very soon the big, black tents were up. The sheep were gathered in, each little group guarded by its own shepherd and dog.[2] The donkeys and camels were fed, and picketed by long ropes. The fires were built and little groups of people gathered about them cooking and eating.

But how do you suppose they made fire? They had no matches, you know. There were three things they might have done. They could twirl a stick with its end upon a piece of wood until a spark was kindled which would set fire to some very dry wood. Some people did it in that way, but it was very slow work. They might have struck a stone against another stone and made a spark, or they might have carried fire in a covered pot or jar from the last camping place.

Well, whether they twirled a stick or struck flint or carried fire in a pot I can't tell, but I know they kindled a fire to cook with and that little Joseph didn't think very much about it one way or another. I think he was hungry and perhaps had been asking his busy mother over and over "Please, mother, give me a piece of bread."

Now I make believe I can see them eating their evening meal. Some are standing up with their food in

[2] **Care of the flocks at night.** When the people travelled there was no time to build a sheep fold every night, so they were guarded by watchful shepherds, by the dogs and by the camp fire.

their hands. Some are sitting on rugs or pillows near the fire. They are eating bread, which the women have baked on hot stones, and cheese, which they made from goat's milk, and dried meat and perhaps some dried figs and olives. They are drinking water, or some simple wine which they made from grapes. Or they may each be taking a turn in dipping a piece of bread in a big pot of mutton boiled with beans and onions. They loved such things. But they ate quickly, for night was coming fast and they felt very little and lonely all by themselves in the great open fields.

The stars came out and looked down on them just as they look down on us every night. The very same stars they are, too, and if they could speak to you they could tell you how little Joseph looked that night. They saw him snuggled up there by his mother, eating bread and cheese.

There was no moon that night, so the men built great fires. Perhaps the yellow eyes of some great lion looked hungrily at the little lambs; but the owner of the yellow eyes was afraid of fire, and he kept back in the darkness.

So Joseph slept, guarded by God's care that had set about him his mother's arms, the blazing, friendly fire, his watchful father, the brave, bold shepherds, and the stars set in the deep blue sky. He was as safe as any little child well could be.

THE STORY OF JACOB'S GOD

JOSEPH'S journey home to his grandfather's was long and slow. Many, many days, many long months even, were spent before they came to a lovely valley.[1] It

[1] **The Valley of Schechem.** This valley was about seventy miles from Hebron, the home of Isaac, Jacob's father.

looked so beautiful to them, because they were so tired of travel, that they decided to stay there for a while. There was green grass for the sheep and sweet flowers and sunshine. The people who lived near were friendly. Perhaps the little lambs were tired. Perhaps they were all weary of travel. Anyway they decided to stay at Schechem for a while.

Joseph was very glad, for now he could play or help his father or brothers all he liked and no one would say, "Come, Joseph, climb up on Kedi. We must go on." The big, black goat-skin tents were set up. The great well was cleaned out and new troughs built. All was made tidy and comfortable.

One evening when Joseph came in from play, very tired and hungry, he called, "Mother! Mother!" But his mother did not answer him. She was kneeling before some little image and saying over and over some words to it. As soon as she had finished she turned to Joseph and said, "What do you want, little son?"

For a moment Joseph forgot how hungry he was. He said, "Mother, what were you doing?"

"I was thanking the gods for bringing us safely through our journey to this lovely valley."

"Did the gods do it, Mother? That ugly little thing?"

"Hush, little son. They hear and punish. Speak always softly to them and beg their favor. Else they may bring thee sorrow and pain."

"Can little things of wood and stone, ugly things, bring harm to us?"

"So my father taught me, Joseph. I would have thee careful and respectful to the images."

"I shall ask Father," said Joseph. "He knows best of all. Here he comes now. I shall ask him. Father! Father!"

"Peace, little son. What do you want?"

"Father, what kept us safe on the journey? Wasn't

it you? I thought it was you, but Mother says——" Here Joseph stopped, fearing to hurt his kind, gentle mother.

Jacob looked all about him, and seeing the image set up in the corner, strode over to it and took it down. Then he said very gently, "Come, Rachel, and you, Joseph. I will tell you what I believe. My father's father, Abraham, once dwelt in the great and wicked city of Ur. There many of the people made little images, such as this one. But our grandfather, Abraham, did not believe in them or worship them, but took all his loved ones and his flocks and went into a distant country that he might be free to worship a true God."

"Who, then, is the true God?" said Joseph.

"The true God," said Jacob gravely, "is a great, wise, loving spirit that watches unseen over us and teaches us the right way to act. This little image," said Jacob, raising it in his hand and throwing it to the ground, "has no power to harm or help us. See how helpless it lies. Come, call all the people together and we will build an altar and worship the true God. Run thou, little son. Tell all thy brothers and thy sister and all the serving people to come to the top of the hill very early in the morning.[2] Tell them to bring all their household images with them. There I will teach them how to pray."

So, very early in the morning, before it was quite light, all the people came to the great oak.[3] There Jacob met them and took from them their images. These he buried in a deep hole which he dug under the tree. Then, turning to the people, he said, "Let each one

[2] **The High Places.** The tops of hills were considered holy places. There the leaders often set up altars to which all the people came for worship.

[3] **Significance of the oak tree.** The oak tree was for some reason regarded as particularly significant. This may be due to its strength and beauty. The stone altars and pillars were often set near an oak.

bring me a stone!" When they had done so Jacob built an altar. Then he said, "I have taken away your images because they cannot help you. If you trust in them you will do foolish, wicked things. But there is a God who lives, unseen of us, yet He watches over us. This that we have built shall be His altar. I will pour out water as an offering to Him,[4] and all of us will pray together." Then Jacob lifted up his eyes and hands and prayed,

"Thou God of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, be Thou our God. As I pour out this water before Thee, so pour out Thy spirit upon us. Teach us the right. Guard us from dangers. Show us the path of duty." [5]

Little Joseph never forgot his father's God.

THE NEW BROTHER

Soon after Joseph's father taught them how to pray to his unseen God, they started again on their journey to his grandfather's home. Again Joseph and his mother climbed into the basket saddle on Kedi's great back and travelled day after day through a wild, lovely country.

[4] They worshipped both with water and with oil. The water was sometimes poured out upon the ground. The oil was poured over the stones. The fat of a young animal that was physically perfect was also burned on the altar. If the smoke of its burning ascended straight upward the sacrifice was thought to be acceptable.

[5] **Jacob's prayer.** We must not suppose that Jacob was essentially Christian. The God to whom he prayed was thought of by him as a tribal god of the Hebrews. Neither must it be thought that all of Jacob's people had the same lofty conception of God that he cherished. Jacob was a leader in religious thought. He differed from the people about him in three ways: (1) He believed in one God as distinguished from many gods, one of whom is the favorite. (2) His one God was a spirit God, not to be seen in the image or figure of stone. (3) His God was a good spirit who cared only for the Hebrew people.

"Mother," said Joseph, "I wish I had a little brother to play with me. Father is kind and I love him dearly. Brother Reuben is kind and I love him. But all my other brothers are so strange. Do they love me?"

"They are very busy, little son, and you are too small for them. They love to wrestle and run and hunt. Wait till you are older."

"Yes, Mother. But it is now that I am lonesome. I want to play now."

"You are the Chief's favorite son, my Joseph. Soon that will mean much to you. But it may be," she added softly, "that God will send you a baby brother. Wait and see."

So they rode on day after day. It grew very warm and the road was rough. Even Kedi's easy walk wearied them and so one day they stopped to rest beside a clear stream.[1] Joseph's mother was very tired, so they made her a bed of soft skins and pillows in her own tent and Joseph himself carried water from the brook to bathe her hands and face. Then, because he was still a little boy and very tired, he fell asleep in a corner.

Some time in the night,—he never afterwards could remember just how it all happened—he was awakened. His father was bending over him and speaking very softly, "Awake, awake, little son."

Joseph sat up and rubbed the sleep from his eyes. The first pale light of dawn was creeping in at the tent door. His mother lay half smiling at him and Joseph thought she looked very pale. But she beckoned to him, and when he crept up closer she turned aside the

[1] **Bethel or Bethlehem.** The place where Rachel died and was buried was about a mile from Bethel, or Bethlehem, the village where many centuries later Jesus was born. It speaks of Rachel's burial as though Jacob dug a grave and placed her body in the ground. It was also customary to place the dead in rock caves or clefts in the rocks. The stone which Jacob set up to mark the place has long since disappeared.

blanket of lamb's down and there lay a tiny, pink baby, fast asleep.

How Joseph's big brown eyes shone! He laughed out loud and then, though he knew very well what it was, he cried out, "What is it, Mother?"

"It is that baby brother you have been longing for. Have you a name for him?"

"He is too little," said Joseph. "How can I play with him?"

"Foolish one!" said Rachel gently, "He will soon grow. You yourself were once small and feeble like him. And see you now, so strong and brown! Come, what shall he be named? Let it be some fine name."

"I think," said Joseph, wrinkling up his smooth forehead, "that since he is so little he should have a little name. I think Nog would be a good name for him."

Then they all laughed and Jacob lifted Joseph in his arms and kissed him and cried, "Nog, you foolish lad! That is a name for a lamb. Your brother must have a man's name. How would you like Benjamin?"

"Does Mother like Benjamin?" said Joseph.

"I like it splendidly," said Rachel. "Two fine boys I have, Joseph and Benjamin." Then she added softly, "You will be very good to little Benjamin when I am gone away?"

"Are you going away, Mother?" cried Joseph, leaving his father's arms and kneeling again by his mother's bed. "We need you so. How can you go away?"

"Perhaps I will not have to go, little son. Weep not. I shall love you and little Benjamin whether I go or stay, be sure of that. But now I am weary and would sleep. Kiss me and your brother and run out to play."

Long afterwards, when Joseph was a man, he remembered his mother's words. He was always good to his brother and loved him dearly.

JOSEPH COMES TO HIS GRANDFATHER'S HOUSE

An old, old man, with long white hair and beard, is sitting in the shade of an oak tree, just where the hills stop and the valley broadens out. Around him the birds are singing and the beautiful flowers are blooming. The sunshine is very warm and pleasant, but though the old man can hear the birds sing he cannot see them nor the flowers nor the lovely grassy valley with the river flowing through it like a silver ribbon, for he is blind.

This poor old man, waiting in the shade of the oak tree, is Isaac, Joseph's grandfather. He has ridden out to meet his son and his grandchildren, but though he can hear their voices and pass his sensitive fingers over their faces he will never know just how little Joseph looks. He cannot see his bright brown eyes and rosy cheeks and shining black curls, but he loves him just the same. He has a present for Joseph in his girdle, something he has had made just especially for Joseph.

A servant stands beside him, a big bronzed fellow with a yellow garment and a long staff.

"Are they coming yet, Kedor? Your eyes are young and keen. Look carefully."

"I see them not, my Lord. Shall I run forward beyond yonder tree? I can see farther over the valley."

"Yes, yes. Run and return quickly. But stay, Kedor. Hearest thou nought?"

"Nothing, my Lord. The birds circle and dip in the sunshine. The wind makes a little rustle in the trees. The camels stamp to drive away the flies, but that is all."

"Thine ears are not as the ears of the blind. I hear a bell. It is far away and very thin and fine, but I doubt

not it is their camel bells. Run now. Let thy laggard eyes testify that my ears hear true."

Kedor runs forward but returns almost at once, shouting,

"They come, my lord. They have topped yonder little hill. They come as a great host, with flocks and herds and many costly camels."

"My son, Kedor! Seest thou my son Jacob?"

"He rides at the head of the caravan and with him in the saddle basket is a young lad who leans far over and waves his hand to thee."

"It is that little Joseph, of whom we have heard, my Jacob's boy. Oh, this blindness! I must see!"

"Patience, my lord! They come."

At a word of command from Jacob, the swift camel on which they rode, ran far ahead of the slow flocks and in a very short time knelt before the old blind man. Jacob and Joseph sprang out and Isaac clasped them in his arms. Eagerly he ran his hands over Jacob's face and body, and cried, "It is indeed my son, returned to me after so many years. I have been so lonely.[1] But now we shall all live happily together. And who is this lad?" he asked, pretending not to know Joseph. "Is this some stranger boy? Thy servant, perhaps?"

Then they all laughed and Joseph threw his arms around his grandfather's neck and kissed him. "I am Joseph," he whispered, "thy little grandson. I am so sorry thou art blind. I will love thee and serve thee."

The tears were rolling down the old man's cheeks, but he wiped them away and held Joseph closer in his arms and said, "Thou shalt be to me as light to my eyes. I will never let thee go. In thee shall all our people be blest as I bless thee."

Joseph was silent, for he did not understand. Only

[1] Rebecca, Jacob's mother, is dead.

long years afterwards he came to know his grandfather's meaning.

Only now, as he leaned close against him, he felt something hard that hurt him and he drew away and felt with his fingers the queerly shaped thing in his grandfather's girdle.[2]

"Ho, ho," laughed Isaac. "So thou hast found me out already! What do you think that is?"

"I know not," said Joseph shyly. "It pressed against me and hurt me."

"Thrust thy hand inside and find it," said Isaac.

So Joseph thrust his hand into the girdle and drew out a beautiful silver cup.[3]

"Oh, Grandfather, is it for me? My very own?"

"It is just for thee, Joseph. See that thou guard it always."

"I will carry it with me all the time. I do thank you, Grandfather," and Joseph kissed the old blind eyes very softly.

So Joseph and his brothers came to live in the land of Canaan.[4] They set up their tents near Isaac, but far enough away so that the flocks could have good grazing. They lived there happily many years.

THE BIRTHDAY PARTY

Now Joseph has come to be a great, tall lad who, though he has never gone to school a day in his life,

[2] The girdle, worn by all, was also used as a pocket.

[3] Silver in its pure form was used for ornaments and sometimes for cups and chains.

[4] **Canaan.** The word Canaan means lowlands, so named from the Semitic peoples emigrating from Mesopotamia before the time of Abraham. Canaan was inhabited by these people, living in walled cities by 2500 B.C. They were not Hebrews.

knows many things that we perhaps do not know. I can't tell you how he learned, but I know he could count, for it was he who counted the sheep and goats every night as they came in to the fold to make sure that none was missing.[1] He could make sweet music on his shepherd's pipe and sing simple airs He could ride any animal and use his sling with great skill. He loved his oldest brother, Reuben, and little Benjamin and his father very much indeed, but his other brothers were not kind to him and he kept out of their way as much as possible.

One morning when Joseph was getting ready to go to work, his father called to him and said, "Come, Joseph. Can you tell me what day this is?"

Joseph looked very happy, laughed and said, "It's my birthday, Father. I am sixteen years old to-day."

"Oh, so old," cried Jacob. "And can you still ride a donkey?"

"Only yesterday I rode, Father, and my toes touched the ground on either side."

"So, so," said Jacob, pretending to look very sad. "I suppose if you had a camel of your own you would have to have some one to teach you to ride."

"Oh, Father," said Joseph eagerly, "I know all the camels, even the baby ones. There is one young camel, a white one he is. His name is Kush. I love him and I know he loves me, for he comes running when I call him. He has a star——"

"Peace, peace, my son. Your tongue will be weary. Look now! How do you like this for a birthday gift?"

Joseph looked and saw a slave bringing up a camel.

[1] **Joseph's duties.** As his father's favorite son he had charge of the servants to see that each task was properly performed. He numbered and branded each animal of his father's flocks. He kept a record of the animals sheared and how much the merchants paid for the wool and the cattle which were sold.

It was all white except for a dark spot like a star on its forehead. It was covered from neck to tail by a beautiful cloth of red and blue stripes, with a green fringe that reached almost to his knees. There was a flat saddle and a rope halter. Joseph gazed in delighted surprise.

"Dinah wove the blanket," cried little Benjamin.

"Is it mine, Father?"

"It is your birthday gift. Come, shall we ride through the fields?"

Joseph seized the stick that hung by the saddle and touched the camel on the neck. "Kneel, Kush," he said.

The beautiful, stately camel sank forward on his knees and Joseph sat upon the saddle. Again he touched the camel's neck with his stick, but in a little different way, and this time the camel rose to his feet. A slave brought another camel and together Joseph and his father rode through the clear morning sunshine. They saw flocks grazing in the meadows while the shepherds watched them. They saw men and women picking great purple bunches of grapes and throwing them into vats, where other bare-footed boys and girls trod on them to press out their juice for wine.[2] They saw men and boys picking nuts [3] and olives.[4] Farther on they saw men shear-

[2] **Making wine.** The grapes were cut from the vines, carried in baskets and thrown into stone troughs or vats. Bare-footed boys and girls trod on the grapes until the juice ran out of them. This juice was then allowed to ferment in skin bottles until it became wine. They also dipped the bunches of grapes into boiling water and then left them in the sunshine until they became raisins.

[3] **Nuts.** They cultivated the almond. In its flowering season the almond tree was peculiarly fragrant.

[4] **The olive.** The olive tree required much care. It needed a great deal of water and a simple form of irrigation was in use. The olive tree grows to be only about thirty feet high. Its leaves are dark green on top and silvery underneath. Its wood is very hard. It has a great many blossoms but bears fruit only every second year. At first the flower is yellow, but as it opens it turns white and when it is full blown it is white with a yellow center. The fruit is about the shape

ing the sheep after they had been driven into the water to wash them. They saw the women at work in the camp, weaving cloth out of the wool or grinding wheat for flour or making butter in goat's skin churns.

"See all this, my son," said Jacob. "Now it is mine, but when I am gone it shall be yours. I love you best of all my sons. You shall rule in my place."

That night there was a feast to celebrate Joseph's birthday. Joseph came to the table wearing a coat of many colors so that all who saw him would know him to be the Chief's favorite son. Jacob had had the coat made especially for Joseph. It was a fine tunic with short sleeves and reached from his neck to his knees. It was made of small pieces of cloth, red, blue, yellow, green, purple, white, and brown, all sewn together and finished by a broad yellow fringe. When Joseph put it on and bound it with a red girdle he felt and looked very proud indeed.

For the birthday feast they had roasted meat, perhaps a calf or a lamb, with rich broth into which they dipped their bread, onions and fresh vegetables, then delicious little sweet cakes of figs [5] and raisins and nuts, with cheese and the wine of the grapes.

of a plum. When unripe it is green but when ripe is a beautiful deep purple or black. The olives are not picked, but are gathered by shaking the boughs or beating them with poles. A great many of the olives are gathered before they are ripe as the oil in them then is much better.

Sometimes the olives were pounded in a mortar to extract the oil, sometimes they were placed in an oil press and the oil extracted by treading. The oil was very valuable and was sent to many other countries. It was used to rub on the hair and beard. This was called anointing. It was used as a medicine, as oil for the lamps, and it took the place of butter and fat in cooking.

[5] **The fig.** The fig trees sometimes grew in the vineyards and sometimes by the side of the road, and provided both food and shade. They provided three kinds of fruit, the early fig, the summer fig and the winter fig. They were gathered by shaking, as were the olives. The summer figs ripened in August and were dried in cakes and used especially by travellers. The winter figs remained hanging on the trees

After the feast they danced and sang to the music of timbrels and harp. Joseph never forget that birthday. All his brothers were there. Even little Benjamin sat up very late and went to sleep at last in Joseph's arms with one big, juicy fig half eaten in his small hand.

Some of Joseph's brothers were angry and jealous. They felt that their father should have chosen one of them to be the head of the family. This troubled Joseph and that night he dreamed a dream.

Related Work. Make Joseph's coat of many colors. Imagination may be very free in its design as no one knows just what it was like.

Find out about the olive and fig industries of today.

JOSEPH'S DREAMS

ALL day Joseph had been working in the fields with his brothers and he was very tired. The strongest men cut the grain with sickles and the boys and women followed binding the sheaves together.[1]

all winter after the tree had shed its leaves and did not ripen until the early part of the year, when the buds were ready to burst open and send forth new leaves.

The fig was also used by the Hebrews for boils and festers.

[1] **The harvest.** The Hebrews sowed their grain in October after the fall rains. They ploughed with a rude wooden plough drawn by oxen, then they harrowed, then levelled the ground. A sower followed the leveller with a basket of seed. This he broadcasted. Harvest commenced by the end of March and lasted about seven weeks. At the close of harvest they had a festival called the Feast of Harvest or the Feast of Weeks.

The grain was reaped with a sickle by the men. The women and boys, following, bound it into sheaves. Sometimes the girls brought water to the fields, and bread dipped in vinegar, as refreshments to the reapers.

The sheaves were carried by camels or donkeys to the threshing floors. They were spread over the floors and the oxen were driven over the grain to tread out the wheat. They also used a flail or a threshing sledge. This was a plank fitted with sharp pointed stones, which were

All day Joseph had been thinking of what his father had told him, how he, little Joseph, should be chief when his father was gone. So that night Joseph dreamed a dream and in the morning he told it. His brothers and his father had just finished breakfast and Joseph said, "Oh my, I had such a strange dream last night." [2]

They all stopped to listen for they believed in dreams far more than we do. To them a dream had meaning. To-day we know them to be but shadows of what we think during the day. But since they believed in dreams they listened respectfully to all that Joseph had to tell.

"I dreamed," said Joseph, "that we were all working together in the fields binding sheaves, when suddenly the sheaves that I had bound rose and stood upright and the sheaves that all the rest of you had bound rose and bowed down to my sheaves."

He had no need to ask them what they thought it meant. Joseph looked into their scowling, dark faces and was silent. Perhaps he was a little frightened. His brothers were all big, strong men who could use him very badly indeed if they were angry. They were angry now.

"Shall you indeed rule over us?" one of them muttered.

"I suppose you dream of being a king?" another jeered.

They were very unfriendly to Joseph. Perhaps it

fixed into holes in the bottom. This was drawn over the grain by the oxen, the driver sitting on the sledge to make it heavier.

After the grain was separated came the winnowing. The grain was thrown up into the air and allowed to fall so that the wind would drive the chaff away, or the grain was poured from a basket.

Then, to make it more nearly clean, it was sifted to clear it from the dirt and stones.

[2] **Dreams.** The Hebrews at this time believed in magic, witchcraft, divination, astrology, and especially in dreams, as a means of understanding and foretelling the future. They believed in ghosts and necromancy.

wasn't very wise for Joseph to tell his dreams in just this way. But he was young and not very wise, and so the next time he dreamed he told of it again.

This time he dreamed of the stars. The stars seemed very real and friendly to these people who lived out of doors a great deal. Sometimes they seemed so near that they might almost be reached. At all times they were like beautiful, faithful friends. So Joseph dreamed another dream.

"I dreamed," he said, "that the sun and the moon and eleven stars bowed down to me." [3]

This made even his kind indulgent father very angry.

"What," he said, "do you imagine that we shall all be your slaves? You are a bold lad. You had better dream no more."

His brothers were even more angry than they had been before and had only sullen, dark looks for Joseph. When they were alone, away from their father, they talked very freely about what they would do to Joseph if they once caught him out alone any distance away from Jacob.

But Joseph went about his duties very quietly. He thought God had sent the dreams to him and he was not sure what they meant; but he did his work well. He was obedient to his father and took good care of his little brother Benjamin. If he had other dreams he did not tell them since he saw he had grieved his father as well as his brothers.

Related Work. Harvest scenes and threshing scenes may be made, either as sand-table models, or as drawings in pencil or color. Compare methods of harvesting and threshing then and now. Note the difference in tools and machines used.

[3] Their belief in astrology, *i.e.*, that the future could be foretold through the movements of the stars, led them to take Joseph's dream very seriously.

JOSEPH GOES ON A JOURNEY

"I WISH," said Jacob to Joseph, "that I could hear from your brothers. I am afraid they have gotten into trouble."

"Where are they, Father?"

"They have gone to the rich valley of Schechem,[1] fifty miles away, to let the flocks feed on the rich grass that grows there. They have sent back no messenger and I am afraid something bad has happened to them."

"Well, Father, if they do not send word to you soon, why not let me go to see what is the matter?"

"Would you be afraid to go so far alone, my son? You have never been so far all alone."

Joseph laughed out loud and said, "Why should I be afraid? I will ride Kush, my own camel, who knows me well. I'd love to go, Father. Please let me."

"Well then, since you are so brave I will. You are tall and strong and Kush is fleet. But if anything should happen to harm you, I should be broken-hearted. But go, and come back quickly. Wear your coat of many colors that all may know the chief's son rides afar. Dinah shall pack many good things to eat in your baskets for your brothers, for I fear their supplies are running low."

So Joseph was very happy. He felt very important to be going off by himself. Who could tell what interesting things might happen? And then, too, it made him very happy to be trusted so. He thought, as he ran out to call Kush, "I must be very wise and careful. My father is depending upon me. I shall act so that he will depend more and more on me, for I love him dearly."

Kush was glad to go, too, or at least he sprang up

[1] **Schechem.** It will be remembered that Jacob had lived near Schechem about four years and owned some land near there.

nimbly when his saddle and the great baskets were strapped on him. The baskets were full of good things, eggs and cheeses and honey, cakes of bread and figs, bunches of raisins, parched grain, and bottles of wine and oil.

His bells tinkled merrily as he shook his head, and Joseph cried, "Ah, Kush, you and I are going travelling out into the big world all alone."

So with a good-by kiss to little Benjamin, who cried to go along, and with a long hug and kiss for his father, Joseph rode away through the morning sunshine. The birds sang sweetly about him. Now he was down in a valley where he could see nothing but bare, rocky walls, and then he was on the crest of a hill where he could see for miles out over the lovely hills that stretched away to the far shining sea.

Kush was fleet and tireless, but after a while the steady klop, klop of his padded hoofs in the sand made Joseph very sleepy and he nodded and drowsed, there in the sunshine. Perhaps he dreamed but there was no one to listen to his dreams.

In the afternoon of the second day he came to the village of Schechem, near where they had lived for so long. Here, when he inquired, he was told his brothers were encamped only a little farther up the valley and he rode on gaily, glad to have found them so easily.

Now his brothers, great, bearded, strong men as they were, were not so glad to see Joseph as he was to see them. They knew him afar off by his coat of many colors and his splendid white camel. So they had time to talk about him before he came near enough to hear what they were saying. You remember they were jealous of him and disliked him. So one said to another, "Here comes that dreamer. What shall we do with him?"

"I think it would be a good plan to kill him and throw

his body into this pit," said another. "We could tell our father that an evil beast had devoured him." [2]

Reuben was there and you remember Reuben loved Joseph. But what could one do against so many? He looked anxiously at their cruel faces, then he said, "Oh, no! Do not kill the lad. Just throw him into this pit."

To himself he was thinking, "I will come to-night, when they are all asleep, and help him out and send him home. And when I get back home I will tell our father all about it and he will know how to punish these wicked fellows."

The other brothers did not know that Reuben planned to save Joseph, but thought, "Good! He will starve to death there in the pit and we can truthfully say we did not kill him."

While all this was going on Joseph was riding steadily toward them.

Related Work. A map of Joseph's journey to Schechem and on to Dothan a few miles beyond where he found his brothers may be made on the sand table or on paper. The location of Hebron and Schechem should at least be reviewed.

This story, and each of the stories following until the Hebrews go to Egypt, may be dramatized as they are taken up. At the conclusion of the Joseph stories, all may be combined and the story dramatized as a whole. Such costumings and properties as the children select may be made or secured, but it is not necessary to go into much detail in costuming and properties.

JOSEPH IS THROWN INTO THE PIT

WHILE his brothers were planning this cruel act, Joseph had come very near. In answer to his cry and

[2] **An evil beast.** Possibly the much feared cave tiger, or bear, or mountain lion.

touch, Kush sank to his knees and Joseph sprang off and came running with outstretched arms to greet his brothers. They did not greet him kindly but looked dark and sullen and said nothing at all.

"Good morning," cried Joseph. "I have come all the way alone to bring you food and carry back tidings to our father. He is anxious about you."

He looked about at their sullen faces and a look of fear came into his eyes. "What is the matter? Where is Reuben? Why don't you say something?"

But still the brothers were silent. Only Judah and Simeon leaped forward and began to tear off Joseph's shepherd cloak and his beautiful coat of many colors. Then Joseph cried out and the tears were in his eyes.

"Let me alone," he said. "I'll tell my father how you treated me. Reuben! Reuben!" he called, for he knew Reuben loved him and would fight for him. But Reuben had gone far away. He knew himself helpless against so many and he was determined to have no part in tormenting his little brother, so he did not hear Joseph's pitiful cries.

Joseph was brave and struck out boldly against his tormentors. But what could one small lad do against nine big, strong men? He was helpless, so they dragged him along over the rough ground until they came to a pit.

A pit was a deep hole hollowed out of the lime stone, with a small opening in it not much larger than a man's body. Water gathered in these pits during the rainy season and often it stayed there all the time. This pit towards which they were dragging Joseph was almost dry. Only a little mud, with lizards and frogs and perhaps a snake or two, were in it.

"Oh, don't put me in that dreadful pit!" Joseph cried. "I will do anything you say. I will tell my father to

make one of you chief when he is gone. I will do anything you say. Let me go! Let me go!"

But they would not listen. "Shut up," said Levi rudely. "We are tired of you and your dreams. When you are dead we shall never be ruled by you, so in you go."

In spite of tears and threats and promises they lifted him and thrust him feet first into the dark pit.

It was not very deep and the mud softened his fall so that he was not hurt. But he was very much frightened and leaped up and beat his fists against the walls and cried and called, now to Kush, his white camel, then to Reuben, and at last to his father who loved him so. But, though Kush heard and came nearer to the pit, he could not help. Reuben was planning to come later and help him out, but Joseph could not know that, and his poor loving, old father was far, far away, thinking, no doubt, "Joseph will be home to-morrow or the next day. Pray God he come safely."

While Joseph wept and called and beat his hands against the walls, his brothers unpacked the baskets of good things and sat down in the shade to have a feast. They ate the bread and cheese and drank the wine and were very merry, or tried to be very merry. Secretly each one felt very uneasy about what they had done to Joseph. They feared their father very much. He was the chief of the tribe. He could punish them in any way he pleased and he would be sure to question them until he knew all they had done. After all, what had they gained by putting Joseph in the pit? "We must get rid of him in some way," growled Levi. "Think up some better way than this. Our father, Jacob, will hang us all if he once knows we have done him harm."

Then Judah cried out, "Look! There is a camel train on its way to Egypt! Why not sell him to these merchants? Then we would have some money."

JOSEPH IS SOLD

THE men whom these cruel brothers saw approaching along the road were merchants who traveled between Persia and Egypt. They carried on their camels all kinds of precious things—silks and linens, spices and rare gums,[1] rugs and silken cloth for curtains, as well as precious jewels and ornaments. They traveled in large companies for protection from wild animals and robbers. They were armed with knives and bows and arrows. While they dealt mostly in cloth and jewels, they often bought boys and girls along the way and, carrying them away off to Egypt, sold them in the public market as slaves. This, of course, was a very wicked, cruel thing to do: but they could do it because they were strong.

So when the brothers saw the merchants coming, they hastily decided to drag Joseph out of the pit and sell him. He would be carried far away and their father would believe him to be dead.

When the merchants came near enough, they signaled to them to halt. The poor camels were glad enough to rest while the men talked.

"Here," said Simeon, "is a fine boy for sale. How much will you pay for him?"

Poor little Joseph stood in his woolen shirt and blinked in the strong glare of the sun. He had hoped when they pulled him out that they had only been playing a rough, cruel joke on him. But now he knew them to be in real earnest and his heart sank in despair. He did not cry out or plead as he had done before. He was

[1] **Spices and gums.** Spices and rare gums consisted of balm and myrrh and frankincense. They were carried by these merchants from Gilead in the north to Egypt, where they were used for making perfumed incense for medicine and embalming.

a brave boy. He straightened his shoulders and looked the bad men straight in the eyes, as much as to say, "You can beat me or even sell me for a slave, but you can't make me a coward."

The merchants saw that he was a fine, strong, handsome boy and wanted to buy him, but they wanted to pay just as little as they could. They were cunning enough to see that the brothers were very anxious to sell quickly, so they said, "We will pay you twelve and a half dollars for him."

"But that is not enough. See how handsome he is. And he is well trained and clever," they cried.

But the sly merchants would not pay more and so at last the brothers let him go for that very small sum. And when they divided the money among themselves, each one had about a dollar and a half. They were ashamed and hid the money quickly that Reuben might not know what they had done.

But Joseph! What was he doing? They dressed him quickly in an old tunic and coat. They tied his hands together and tied him to a camel so that he could not run away, and there he ran day after day, through the burning sands of the desert, over the rough, rocky trails, until at last he came to Egypt.

They were not all unkind to him. He slept at night and he had enough to eat. He was young and strong and had been trained to run, so he did not suffer as much as we would. But still it was fearfully hard. He kept thinking of his home, of his dear father and sweet little Benjamin and poor Kush, whose long legs would so easily carry him over this fearful sand. But he dared not think of them too much for it made him want to cry. He would not let his masters see him cry.

But at last he came to the city of Memphis in Egypt and was stood up in the public slave market for some one to buy.

Schopin

The Selling of Joseph

By Courtesy of Perry Pictures Co., Malden, Mass.

Raphael

The Fall of Jericho (See p. 207)

By Courtesy of Perry Pictures Co., Malden, Mass.

WHAT THE WICKED BROTHERS TOLD JOSEPH'S FATHER

WHILE Joseph is running all the weary way to Egypt, tied to a camel's saddle, we must see what kind of a wicked tale his brothers made up to tell his poor, old father.

As soon as the brothers had gone to sleep on the day they sold Joseph to the merchants, Reuben did some strange things. First, he fed and saddled Kush, Joseph's beautiful white camel. Then he put some bread and cheese and wine in a basket. Then he got a strong rope, and with these things he stole quietly to the mouth of the pit into which Joseph had been thrown, and kneeling down called softly, "Little brother! Oh, little brother!"

But no eager voice answered him. Again Reuben called and listened. Then he began to be frightened.

"What can have happened?" he thought. "They surely put him here. Nothing could harm him. Little brother, it is Reuben who calls! I am come to take you out and send you home to father. Answer me! See, I send you a rope."

But Joseph was far away, going on and on, and could not hear.

After a little Reuben became so frightened that he climbed down into the pit himself, thinking that Joseph might be seriously hurt or so sound asleep that he did not hear. But when he found that the pit was empty he was fearfully angry and went storming to his brothers and woke them out of their sleep to say,

"What have you done to Joseph? He is not in the pit. Tell me what you have done."

But they knew very well that if they told Reuben that

Joseph was on his way to Egypt with the merchants Reuben would ride swiftly after him and fetch him back. So they would not tell him, but laughed and made fun of poor Reuben's grief and sorrow. After a long time, when they knew Joseph was too far off to be brought back, they told Reuben what they had done. They did so, not because they were sorry, but because it was necessary for them all to agree upon a tale to tell their father and they knew that if they told one thing and Reuben told another they would neither one be believed. So this is the story they made up to tell Jacob.

"We will send a servant with that wonderful coat of many colors to our father. But first we will dip the coat in the blood of a kid and drag it in the earth so that it will look all torn and blood-stained. We will tell the servant to say that perhaps a wild beast has devoured Joseph."

"I will not stand by and see my father so deceived," cried Reuben.

"We are eight to one," Judah muttered sullenly. "You need not tell the tale. Just see to it that you tell no tales at all."

In the meantime poor old Jacob was sitting at the door of his tent, looking eagerly out over the hills in the direction from which he expected Joseph to come, when he saw a servant coming. He stood up trembling, for he was very anxious about Joseph. The servant came and knelt before him, holding out a bundle to him.

"Here is something your sons sent you," he said. "They told me to tell you that they found it in the fields."

Jacob took the bundle in his hands and as he did so it fell from its wrappings. It was the beautiful coat of many colors, all stained and torn. For a few moments Jacob stared at it in amazement. Then he fell forward upon his knees and cried,

"It is Joseph's coat! Some wild beast has devoured him! He was but a lad and I sent him far from home alone. Oh, my son, my dearest son! He is dead! He is dead!"

Then Dinah came running and little Benjamin and all the other people, but they could not comfort Jacob. For many days they wept and mourned for Joseph. They took off their bright colored clothing and went about in dingy, sad garments. They fasted and sang long, mournful songs or chants.[1] Some of them wept very bitterly for they loved Joseph very much.

By and by the other brothers came back home and lived with Jacob, but though he questioned them earnestly,[2] they never told their father what they had done. Perhaps they were ashamed, no doubt they were afraid, and after all Joseph was gone and they thought there was nothing to be gained by telling.

JOSEPH FINDS A NEW MASTER

For many, many days Joseph ran behind the camel on his way to Egypt. It was well for him that he was a strong, big boy, for if it had been otherwise, he must surely have fallen by the way. For many weary miles the road ran through a dreadful desert [1] where the deep sand burned and cut his feet and the heat and thirst almost drove him mad. Only at night, when he lay

[1] **Mourning customs.** They shaved the head, wore sackcloth and, allowing the fires to die out, sat among the ashes and chanted mourning songs. The period of mourning was thirty days.

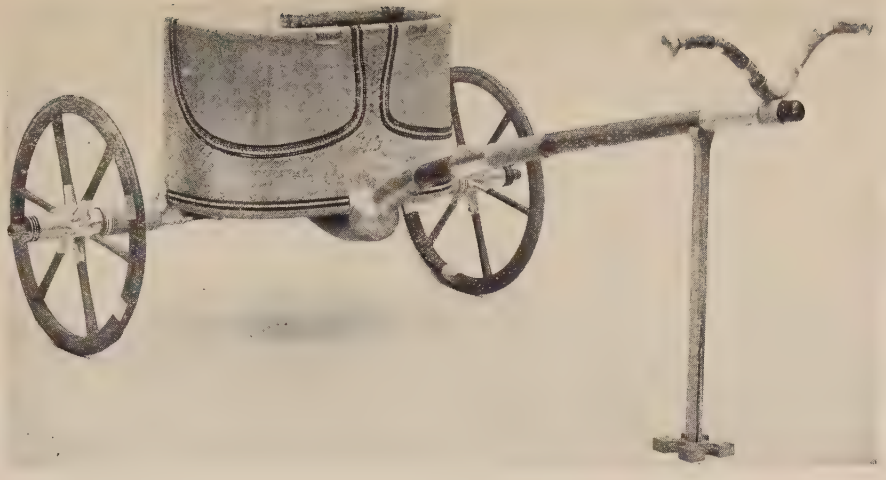
[2] **Jacob's belief.** It is probable that Jacob did not fully believe the tale his sons told him concerning Joseph, but he had no means of disproving it.

[1] **Caravan route to Egypt.** The caravan route followed by all the traveling merchants followed the shore line of the Mediterranean Sea, at some distance from it.

wrapped in his blanket looking up at the bright desert stars, did he have a chance to think of his home and loved ones so far away. Some way the stars seemed to comfort him. They were the same stars that looked down upon his father and little Benjamin. I think Joseph was not wholly sad and discouraged. I wonder if he thought of his dreams that had so angered his brothers!

After many days the caravan passed through the desert and came out in sight of a great river. It looked almost like a lake, with little city islands here and there. But it was only the great and wonderful Nile river in its flood time. All the people were very happy to have the Nile in flood, for it meant a good harvest, with little work for them. Of course Joseph did not know this and no one told him, for no one could understand a word he said and he could not understand a word any one else said. But there is much to be learned just by keeping our eyes open, at least so Joseph found. You may be very sure he learned much that was interesting.

For one thing, I imagine Joseph had never seen a boat. He had been born and brought up far from a body of water. I wonder if he was just a little afraid when his master told him to step into a boat to be ferried across the wide river! I know he was brave, so I believe he soon got over it even if he had just at first felt a little frightened. He saw many interesting sights. Among them were beautiful buildings with towers shining in the evening sunshine; lovely ladies being carried in the streets in boxes borne on the shoulders of sturdy men; gorgeous chariots drawn by beautiful horses, being driven by men who stood erect and smiled with pleasure; slaves running here and there in great numbers, and crowds of people laughing and talking and having a good time after a day's work. To Joseph, used to the solitude of the wild, lonely mountain places, it seemed a



Model of Egyptian Chariot. Original, Thebes, About 1425 B.C.

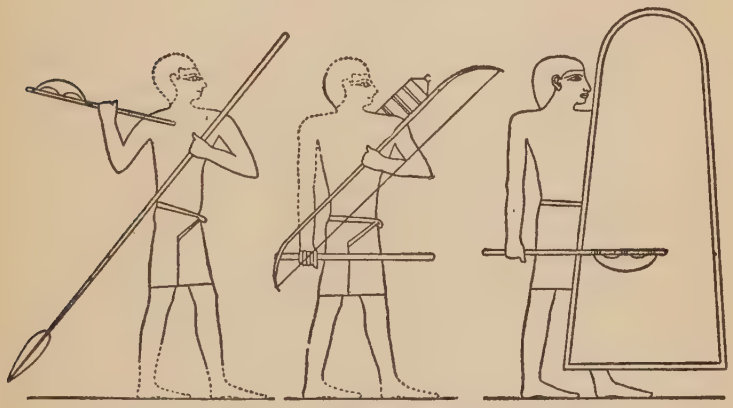
Spears with Bronze Tips as Made by the Hebrews

Egyptian Knives, Axes, Spears, and Spear Case, About 2000 B.C.

Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art

very babel of noise and confusion. His head ached and he was glad to wrap his old, worn blanket about him and sleep, even though he had no roof over him. Can you see him, lying there in a corner, in a strange city among strange people who cared nothing for him or even knew him to be there? The next day he was to be sold again to any one who wanted him to do hard labor. He seems very lonely and helpless and we are sorry for

SERVANTS ARMED (1) WITH SPEAR AND BATTLE-AXE, (2) WITH BOW, QUIVER AND SHORT STAFF, (3) WITH BATTLE-AXE AND GREAT SHIELD.



Armed Attendants to an Egyptian Ruler—About 2000 B.C.
Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art

him. But in reality he is being cared for and directed towards a high and wonderful place in life, where he can help all his own people. So does God care for us all though we cannot always see just how He is doing it.

But morning came, and Joseph woke and rubbed his eyes and sprang up. To-day he was to stand in the slave-market and perhaps be sold again. He was hoping and praying for a good, kind master. Many men came to look at him and examine his arms and legs to see how

strong he was. Everyone admired his fair face and rosy cheeks, for the Egyptians were all swarthy and dark-haired. Very soon a man came who looked at him very keenly, felt him all over, spoke to him kindly and then turned to the merchant, and after long quarreling over the price, paid over some pieces of gold and led Joseph away.

The little shepherd boy of Canaan was slave to Potiphar, who was an officer in the court of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt.[2]

JOSEPH FINDS A NEW HOME

When next we see Joseph he is running through the streets of the city of Memphis in Egypt, behind the chariot of his new master, Potiphar. I imagine that he was very dirty from his long travelling through the deserts and from sleeping with the camels in the open or in the corners of the slave-market, so that the very first thing he would do would be to have a bath and change his soiled clothing and have his hair cut. Instead of his shepherd's cloak and tunic they gave him only one garment, a short skirt that came only to his knees. He was now a slave and must wear a slave's clothes. But this did not trouble him at all, for it was a warm climate and it was easier to do his work in a short garment; and he didn't have to worry about buttons and shoe laces as we do.

After he was bathed and dressed he had some breakfast, perhaps some fish and melons, or more likely some parched grain or rice. He was a slave and had only

[2] **Egypt.** It was then the most powerful and highly civilized country in the world.

poor and simple food. Then, of course, he went to work.

The Egyptians loved flowers and as it was so warm all the time they had them in great profusion,—every kind of flower we know and many more, roses, lilies, violets, and many vines that not only had lovely blooms but smelled very sweet as well. But though it was warm, it was also very dry, and they had to carry water to all these flowers. This was Joseph's first work in his new home. He carried water in two skin pails swung on a rod across his shoulders, and poured it over the flowers.

The Egyptians also loved vegetables to eat and had great gardens of onions, beans, cucumbers and melons, which must also be watered and hoed. This was hot, hard work for many poor slaves. Then, besides this work, Joseph had to feed the dogs and horses and cranes, to run on many errands, and carry many messages for his master, and sometimes, because he was so strong and young and handsome, he was made one of the four slaves who carried the litter in which his beautiful mistress sat when she took a ride through the streets of the city.

It was a very lovely place in which to work and no one was unkind to him. But it was lonely, for you see he could speak only Hebrew and all about him spoke Egyptian. Perhaps the other boys laughed at him when he tried to make them understand; but I like to think that he found a friend among the boys, who taught him and helped him. This much I know is true: Joseph did his work well and cheerfully and learned very fast, so well and fast that his master soon gave him more important work to do, and after a few years gave him his freedom, but still employed him to be his overseer. An overseer is one who has charge of all the work to see that all is done right. In this position Joseph travelled

around and learned much about the country and its customs. He learned how great and rich it was, how many people lived in it, how much wheat and fruit and oil and food of all kinds it produced. He learned how much these things cost. All this knowledge was very useful to him in later years.

I wonder why, in all these years, he did not send word of his safety to his father, Jacob, who was mourning for him! Was he still afraid of his wicked brothers? Or did he feel angry at them and unwilling to let them know that he was doing well? I think he must have felt grieved and hurt at their unkindness. No doubt he often dreamed of them, for Joseph was always a dreamer. He grew very skillful in understanding the meaning of dreams, too, and in that way he won favor in the king's eyes and became a very important man in Egypt.

It all came about in this way. Joseph's mistress, Potiphar's wife, accused him falsely of doing a very wicked thing. She was not a very good woman. Potiphar believed her and put Joseph into prison. It was not a very bad prison and in it Joseph had a chance to meet many men who knew the king. Among these men was the king's chief baker and his cup-bearer. Once a year, on the king's birthday, a good many of these prisoners were set free, and of course the baker and the cup-bearer and Joseph were all hoping very anxiously that the king would set them free. No matter how good a prison is, it is always a dreary place. Well, the baker and the cup-bearer both dreamed dreams and they were very much troubled by them. In some manner they found out that Joseph understood and could tell them the meaning of their dreams. So they called him in and begged him to tell them what the dreams meant.

The cup-bearer told his dream first. It was this. "In my dream I saw a vine tree on which there were three branches. And as I looked, it budded and blossomed

and ripe grapes came on it. And I dreamed that I had the king's golden cup in my hand, and I plucked a bunch of grapes and pressed the juice into the cup and gave it into the king's hand."

Then Joseph said, "This is the meaning of thy dream. The three branches on the vine are three days. In three days the king shall restore thee to thy place and thou shalt give the cup into his hand as thou used to do."

Then Joseph said, "Oh, think of me when it shall be well with thee, and get me out of this place."

And the cup-bearer was sorry for Joseph and promised that he would ask the king to set Joseph free.

Then the chief baker told his dream. He said, "I dreamed that I had three willow baskets on my head and the topmost one was filled with all kinds of pastries for the king, and the birds came and ate them out of my basket."

But Joseph knew about this man, that he was really guilty of wrongdoing and the king would not forgive him, so he said, "This is the meaning of thy dream. In three days the king shall hang thee upon a tree and the vultures shall eat thy body."

When the king's birthday came, there was the usual fine procession and rejoicing, and the king gave a great feast to all his officers. He ordered that his chief cup-bearer be set free and restored to his old position, but he ordered that his chief baker be hanged as a guilty man.

But the chief cup-bearer forgot all about his promise to Joseph and did not speak of him to the king.

THE KING'S DREAMS

The days passed slowly for Joseph behind the high, dark walls of his prison. He worked hard all day. He

never saw the sunshine nor heard the birds singing. He grew sadder and sadder. Often he told himself, "The cup-bearer promised to speak for me. Perhaps to-day he will remember. To-morrow the king will send for me. Oh, I am weary of this dark prison! Why does not my father send and search me out? Oh, Kush! Oh little brother!" and he hid his face in his hands and the tears crept out from between his fingers.

Then a strange thing happened. A key grated in the lock. The door of his cell was thrown open. Joseph sprang to his feet in amazement.

Two men stood in the doorway. They bore in their hands staves and on their heads they wore royal turbans that marked them soldiers of the king. Because they were soldiers they spoke curtly.

"Are you Joseph, the Hebrew?"

"I am that unfortunate one," said Joseph sadly.

"The king has need of you."

The king! Joseph's heart beat hard and he trembled. The cup-bearer then had not forgotten! Perhaps he, too, would be set free!

But the soldiers were in haste.

"Away with him to the bath and the barber," they cried. "Put on him a clean robe and anoint his body with sweet oils. The king could not abide the stench of this prison. Hasten!"

One hour, and Joseph was weeping in his prison cell. The next, and he was standing, all clean and sweet smelling, in soft, rich garments, before the Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Around him were all the beauty and splendor of the court. A great throng was assembled, made up of all the greatest and wisest men of the country. The king sat on his throne, a stately, terrible figure, and beside him sat his queen, gleaming in jewelled splendor.

Poor Joseph dared not raise his eyes. He did not

know why he had been put in prison. Perhaps he was now to be put to death. He trembled and grew pale.

Then the king spoke, and such a silence fell upon the audience that Joseph could hear the soft splash of the water in the fountain outside. Would he ever see his home again? Or throw his arms about his father's neck? For a moment he swayed, dizzy and faint with the splendor and fear and pain. Then the stately voice of the king fell upon his ears.

"You are that Hebrew, Joseph, of whom my cup-bearer has spoken?"

Joseph's heart leaped within him. The cup-bearer had not forgotten! Some hearts are faithful. But not daring to lift his head, he only bowed and murmured, "I am he."

"We are perplexed," went on the smooth voice of the king. "Our wise men are as children and their counsel as the changing winds. I have dreamed a dream."

Now Joseph dared lift his eyes. A dream! He was himself a dreamer of dreams. He knew and understood their meaning. But careful now! If he could please this king, then he would never want for anything again. But if he displeased the king—it was too dreadful to think about!

"This," said the king, "was my dream. See if you can interpret it, since all my seers cannot tell me its meaning. In the deepest darkness of the night I slept, and lo! I was beside a mighty river. The sunlight sparkled upon its blue waves. The wild birds sang amid the flowers. As I looked, I saw seven fat kine come up out of the water and begin to crop the tender green grass. As I looked there came up out of the river seven more kine, but they were lean and scrawny and altogether bad to see. While I watched them the poor, lean kine ate up the seven fat kine and you could not tell that they had eaten."

Joseph lifted his head.

"Ah, but wait!" continued the king. "I woke and thought about my strange dream, trying to understand it. But soon I fell asleep again, and again I dreamed. I saw a stalk of wheat come up out of the ground with seven ripe heads upon it, each one full and good, and another stalk came up with seven shrivelled heads. And as I watched, the seven shrivelled heads ate up the good heads. What is the meaning of these dreams? I have asked all the wise men in my kingdom and they cannot tell me. I am sore troubled and perplexed!" The king looked at Joseph anxiously.

Joseph had forgotten his fears. He drew himself up proudly and spoke fearlessly so that all the people might hear.

"Your dreams, O king, have the same meaning. God has sent them to warn you. A great disaster is to come upon you. A great famine is about to come upon your land. But there will first be seven years of good crops. These are the seven fat kine. Then will come seven years of dry weather. The rain will not come nor the mighty Nile overflow its banks. The seven bad years will consume all that can be saved from the seven good years. This, O king, is the meaning of your dreams. It is a warning sent of God."

Joseph ceased and looked up at the king. The Pharaoh was still grave and serious.

"If our gods have so determined to ruin us," he said, "how shall we escape their purpose?"

"My lord," answered Joseph, "let the king find a wise, discreet man and set him over all Egypt that he may save, during these seven years of plenty that are coming, enough to keep the people from starving during the seven years of famine. Then shall all live and prosper."

Then at last did the king smile. He stood up and

drew a great ring from his finger. He stretched out his hand to Joseph.

"You are a wise and good man. Through you I hear the voice of God. You alone of all my people are able to do this thing and save us all from death. I set you over the land of Egypt to rule next to the king."

How far now was Joseph from that dreary prison!

THE SEVEN GOOD YEARS

THE seven good years passed happily away. The rains came in their season. The Nile overflowed its banks, bringing down not only water, but rich soil from the mountains. Men planted their seeds; wheat and barley and flax. Rich fruits ripened in the sunshine, more, far more, than the people could use.

Joseph went among the farmers and urged them to plant more than they really needed. They all did so and the surplus, that is, all that could not be used, was stored in great stone granaries to await the time of famine. All over Egypt arose great storehouses, and as the seven good years passed these were filled with shining grain, awaiting the time when there should be no rain and men and women and little children should come crying to the king, saying, "We are hungry. The earth brings forth no fruit or grain. Give us something to eat!"

It was Joseph who planned and saw that all this was well done. From plain Joseph the king had changed his name to the high-sounding Egyptian name, Zaph-nath-Paaneah.[1] He had married an Egyptian woman named Asenath[2] and had two little rosy cheeked boys

[1] Zaph'-nath-Pä-a-ne'äh, two words.
[2] Ä-sen'-ath.

called, Menassah [3] and Ephraim.[4] They lived in a stately palace and were very happy. The memory of his cruel brothers grew dim in Joseph's mind, but he often thought of his old father and his dear little brother Benjamin. Slowly there grew up in his mind the belief that some great, wise good power was guiding him, shaping his life for him in ways he could not understand. He thought of this power as Yavyah. We think of him as God.

Then, true to Joseph's word, came the first of the seven bad years. Day after day the hot sun beat down upon the earth until it began to crack open. The grass withered and dried up, so that there was nothing for the cattle to eat. They bawled piteously and very soon many of them died.

Eagerly the people watched the sky for clouds and listened at night for the patter of raindrops on their roofs. But a pitiless sun beat down upon them from a cloudless sky. The scorching winds blew upon them from the great deserts to the east and west. It seemed as though they must all die. Many did die that first terrible year; but when the rainy season passed for the second time and there was still no rain and they could plant no crops, then the people began to come to the king and plead in earnest for a little food, just a little, only enough to keep them alive.

Then it became Joseph's duty to open the great granaries which he had filled during the seven good years and give each man food enough to keep him and his little ones alive until the blessed rain should come once more.

This he did and they went away, happy and thankful that Joseph's wisdom and skill had saved them from death.

[3] Mĕ-nas′-sah.
[4] Ēph′-raim.

Related Work. Draw maps of the Nile River on paper, or make a sand-table model of the River to help in showing the importance of the Nile to the people. The irrigation methods of that time may well be studied. Wheels with buckets or cups for lifting the water were placed at intervals along the River and poured the water thus lifted up into ditches conducting it to the fields near by. The facts of the yearly overflow of the Nile and their importance to the lives of the Egyptians should be made familiar in the study of Egypt.

JOSEPH SEES HIS BROTHERS AGAIN

AMONG the people who came to Joseph for grain were many foreigners, for the famine lay heavy also upon all the lands near Egypt. Joseph had given orders that all the people who entered Egypt at any of its border cities should give their names and business, also the name of the place from which they came, to his overseer. This information was sent to Joseph each day so that he might determine whether or not he would give the people food.

So it happened one morning that Joseph, in reading the report of his overseer, saw that Reuben, Levi, Simeon and Judah, shepherds of Hebron, together with six other brothers, had come to Egypt and wished audience with the great Zaphnath-Paaneah. Though twenty long years had gone by since Joseph had seen his brothers and he had no reason now to fear them, still his heart did give a great throb, half of fear, half of exultation.

"I have them now in my power," he thought. "I shall use craft with them. I shall beguile the truth from them. I shall learn if my father still lives and if my brother remembers me." He called his steward and gave orders that as soon as the shepherds from Hebron

should reach Memphis they should be brought at once before him.

Soon they came solemnly in and stood awkwardly before him, ten great swarthy, desert men with rough, dirty shepherd coats, their heads bound in heavy striped shawls from which their long matted hair and beards fell over their shoulders. Joseph knew that each man carried, hidden in his girdle, a long, keen knife. He also knew just how cruel and relentless and cunning these men could be. From his throne-like seat, cool, clean-shaven, in thin, white, perfumed robes, he laughed bitterly to himself to think how these men thought of their lost brother as a slave, if they thought of him at all, and how frightened they would be to know who the man before them really was. He pretended that he did not understand Hebrew and, speaking to them through an interpreter, said harshly, "Where did you come from?"

"We are come from Hebron. The famine is in our country also and we wish to buy a little food," said Reuben, bowing low before Joseph.

"I believe you are spies," cried Joseph. "What do you do? Who are your friends?"

Then Judah spoke. "We are honest men, my lord, come to see if we can buy a little corn [1] to save our poor old father's life."

Joseph had been waiting for them to mention their father, but he said casually, as though it was of little concern, "Have you then a father or another brother?"

Then Reuben spoke again bravely, "My lord, we are all the sons of one man. There were twelve of us, but one is dead. Our father is very old and loves his youngest son, Benjamin, so much that he would not let him come with us. We are honest men. We have money. Please believe us and sell us a little grain."

[1] **Corn.** The general term for grain—barley, wheat, rice and rye. Corn such as our Indian maize was unknown to the Egyptians.

Joseph felt very happy to hear that Benjamin was alive. A great longing to see his little brother came over him, but he only said, pretending to be very angry, "Do you not know that I have the power to put you all in prison? I will do it, too, unless you prove you are speaking the truth by bringing your youngest brother to me."

"Our lives and the lives of our little ones depend upon our getting food," said Reuben sadly, "and yet we dare not ask our father to let us bring Benjamin. He does not trust us."

Then they talked earnestly together, never dreaming that the great ruler of Egypt could understand their Hebrew words. They knew very well why their father would not trust them. He had trusted them once long ago with Joseph and they had let a wild beast devour him. And now the lives of every one of them depended upon their being able to persuade their father to trust them again.

As he listened to their words in the old familiar language of his childhood, such a home-sick longing came over Joseph's heart that great, rich and powerful as he was, he felt the hot tears stinging in his eyes and he left the room and wept like a child.

Then, washing his face carefully to remove the traces of tears, he returned and said, "If you indeed speak the truth, let this man," and he laid his hand on the shoulder of cruel Simeon, "remain in prison. But the rest of you may take corn in your sacks with you and depart in peace. But," he added in warning, "unless you bring your brother with you, you shall not see my face again."

They were glad to pay their money and get in return their sacks full of corn. What they did not know was that Joseph had caused each man's money to be returned to his sack. When they found it out they were amazed and frightened. There was more in all this than they

could understand. They hastened on their homeward journey because they were anxious to tell their father all about it.

Related Work. By use of the map, recall the location of the region of Hebron, and trace the probable route of Joseph's brothers in their journey to Egypt.

BENJAMIN GOES TO EGYPT

After a long, hard journey they reached Hebron and went at once to their father's tent. They did not stop to rest or wash or eat any food, but crowded into Jacob's tent and told him all the strange tale.

"The man who rules the land," they said, "accused us of being spies. We told him over and over again that we were honest men, but he would not believe us and asked us many questions."

"What questions did he ask?" said Jacob.

"Well, he asked us if our father was alive and if we had another brother."

"Strange, strange," cried Jacob. "Why should he care about your father?"

"We cannot tell," they answered. "But stranger still, he would not give us corn or let us go unless we promised to bring Benjamin with us when we came again. Simeon he kept in prison and unless we go back quickly and take Benjamin he may be put to death."

"And still more strange," cried another, "the man returned our money in our sacks. We did not find it out until we were well on our way."

Poor old Jacob was so overwhelmed by all this confusing news that he could not think clearly. One thing only seemed clear to him.

"You are taking away my children," he cried. "Joseph

is not and Simeon is not, and now you want to take Benjamin. You shall not have him! We will starve, but you shall not take him away. I do not trust you. Oh my son, my dear son, Joseph! Where are you?" Then the old man hid his face and wept. He kept saying over and over, "They shall not take Benjamin! They shall not take him away!"

But the time soon came when they were again without food. The earth was dry and hard. There was no water save in the deepest wells. The cattle bawled night and day in hunger. Even the little children whimpered and cried for bread.

"Go again! Buy us a little food in Egypt," said Jacob.

"We dare not go without our brother," answered Judah. "The man did declare that unless we brought Benjamin with us we should not see his face again."

"Why were ye so unkind as to tell the man ye had another brother?"

"He asked us outright," declared Judah. "How could we know that he would wish to see Benjamin? There is something we do not understand. But father," he continued earnestly, "I will be surety for my brother. Let him go with me and I will assuredly bring him back. I will be bondsman [1] for him. If you do not, then must we all die, yonder little ones as well as Benjamin himself."

Then Jacob sighed bitterly and said, "If it must be so, then go! Take the man a little present, some of our best fruit, some balm, a little honey, spices and myrrh, nuts and almonds.[2] Take also double money as well as

[1] **Bondsman.** A bondsman is one who pays if the orignial debtor is unable to pay. Judah meant to give his life for Benjamin's, if necessary.

[2] **The present.** Balm, spices, myrrh, nuts and almonds were delicacies of which they still had a supply. A present was courtesy from one chief to another.

that which ye found in your sacks. And take," he spoke more slowly, but clearly and bravely, "take your brother with you. If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

So again they journeyed into Egypt and Benjamin, full of eager, happy curiosity, went with them. How could the rich Egyptian ruler wish to see a Hebrew boy? Benjamin dreamed many happy dreams on the way down, dreams of wealth and splendor; but he never once thought of his brother Joseph, who had loved him so well.

Again they stood before the great ruler. Joseph, glancing them over with his quick eyes, saw Benjamin and his heart leaped for happiness.

"Bring these men to my house and prepare food," he commanded. "They shall dine with me to-day."

Joseph's brothers looked about them timidly in the wonderful palace-like hall of his house. It was all so utterly new and strange! They trembled and were silent. But the servants brought water and washed their feet. They smelled the delicious food that was being made ready. They gave each other sly nods and knowing signs, but said very little.

At noon Joseph came and said, "Ha! So you are come again!"

"Yes, my lord," answered Judah. "The famine is still dire in our land. But our father has sent you a present of the best that he had."

"Is your father alive and well? Is he still alive?"

"He is alive and well," answered Judah.

Then Joseph caught sight of Benjamin standing among them, the dear little brother, whose love had comforted him when his mother had gone away so long ago.

"Is this then your younger brother, of whom you spoke? God be gracious unto thee, my son," he said, but

the tears stood in his eyes. He could not keep them back. So turning quickly, he called, "Set on the food!"

So the silent, deft servants served the food, but Joseph ate at a table by himself, and the Egyptians by themselves, for they were too proud to eat with the Hebrews; and the brothers ate by themselves. But it was a merry dinner, for Joseph amused himself by further mystifying them with his favors. He had Reuben served according to his birthright [3] and Benjamin according to his youth. And he sent choice messes [4] or bits of food from his own plate to each one of the brothers, but he always sent Benjamin five times more than he did the others. And they ate the delicious food and drank the rich, cool wine and were very merry with him.

JOSEPH REVEALS HIMSELF TO HIS BROTHERS

VERY early the next morning Joseph sent his brothers away with full sacks of food and grain, all that they could carry. He bade them a fond farewell and they went away happy. What they could not know, for Joseph had caused it to be done secretly, was that in

[3] The birthright belonged to the eldest and carried with it the right to be served first and best.

[4] **Choice messes.** It is probable that Joseph served his brothers with a rich banquet, such as roast goose, roast duck, boiled beef, venison, grouse, and fish, with onions, garlic, peas and leeks, with fresh cucumbers and fruits, and rich pastries and wines.

Each guest took from the large dish with his fingers, and putting it on his own plate, ate it with his fingers. They sat on chairs and used linen napkins to wipe their fingers. Joseph amused himself by sending choice bits from his own dish to his brothers. No doubt they had music while they ate.

each man's sack was his money, and in Benjamin's sack was not only money, but Joseph's own silver cup, cunningly wrought, which he used not only for drinking purposes but for divining, or forecasting events.

Then Joseph said to his steward, "Up! Follow after the men and, when you overtake them, say, 'Why have ye returned evil for good? Ye have stolen my master's silver cup.'"

Out on the broad, open road, with faces turned homeward, Joseph's brothers laughed and talked among themselves.

"Why think you," said Judah, "that the great Egyptian so favored Benjamin? Is he not the youngest and least of us all?

"What I do not understand," said Reuben, "is how he knew that the birthright belonged to me."

"Mayhap he discerned it in his silver cup," said Gad, the silent one.

At this they all laughed.

"Ah, but who follows after us in the chariots of the king? Alas, I feared! I feared!" cried Judah.

With a great flourish the chariot stopped beside them. From it stepped Joseph's servant, that same steward who had waited upon them yesterday.

Now he looked upon them sternly. "How is it," he said, "that ye so return evil for good as to steal away the master's cup?"

Oh, how they were terrified and began each one to deny! Judah, the brave one, said, "Why do ye say these things? We are honest men. We returned the money we found in our sacks. But if so be," he added, looking darkly at his cowering brothers, "if it so be that the cup shall be found in any man's sack, let that man die and we will all be your bondsmen."

"It shall be," declared the steward, "that he with

whom the cup is found shall be my master's servant and ye shall be blameless."

Down came the sacks from the backs of the asses. Swiftly they were opened. Beginning with Reuben's sack, the steward searched. Reuben is innocent! Judah is innocent! Swiftly the search went on. Gad is innocent! At last! Far down in Benjamin's sack, where he himself had thrust it, the steward drew forth the silver cup.

"This man," he cried, "shall be my master's bondsman. Begone, all of ye!"

"It may not be," said Judah. "I myself am surety for the lad. Reload the asses. We return to Egypt."

So, very sorrowfully the little procession, that had been so happy and gay, filed slowly back into the city and came again to Joseph's house.

He was still at home. When he saw them, he cried out roughly, "How now? Know ye not that such a man as I can divine?[1] The man in whose sack the cup was found shall be my bondsman. As for the rest of ye, get ye up in peace unto your father."

Then Judah spoke. Brave, trembling Judah dared to speak in the face of death.

"My lord, let me speak."

So Joseph heard what he wished most to hear, the whole pitiful tale: how Judah was bondsman for Benjamin; how their father's love was centered upon Benjamin because of the loss of a dearly loved son, Joseph; how he sat, even then, waiting their return; of the hunger, the grief, the last real sacrifice; of the sad cry, 'if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.' "And," continued Judah, "it shall come to pass, when he seeth the lad is not with us, that he will die and we shall have

[1] **Divine.** That is, foretell events by noting the movement of water in his divining cup. It is probable that Joseph was here seeking to play upon the superstitious fears of his brothers.

brought down his gray hairs in sorrow to the grave. Let me be your servant and send the lad home to his father."

"Oh," cried Joseph, "this is more than I can bear! Cause every man to go out from me."

And when they stood there alone in the stately Egyptian palace, Joseph cried, "I am Joseph, your brother whom ye sold into Egypt." And he wept so that the waiting Egyptians heard him from the next room. "Is my father still alive? Does he remember Joseph, the little Joseph, whom ye threw into the pit?"

But his brothers were silent. They were troubled and amazed.

"You are thinking," cried Joseph, "that I will punish you for your unkindness. Be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that you sold me hither. God sent me before you that I might save your lives. It was not you who sent me, but God. He has made me rich and powerful in the land. So go now, bring down your father and all your people, your wives and little ones, and I will give you rich lands. I will nourish you. There are yet five years of famine to come. Oh, do you not see? Does my brother Benjamin not see? It is my mouth that speaketh to thee. Go, tell my father of all my glory in Egypt. Go bring my father here." And he fell weeping upon Benjamin's neck and kissed him; and Benjamin, weeping, kissed Joseph.

Then Joseph kissed each brother, a kiss of forgiveness, and after that they all talked eagerly together.

Dramatization. At this point the dramatization of the entire story of Joseph may be carried through. The next story, relating the coming of Jacob to Egypt, may be included, and, at any rate, should be read in connection with the whole Joseph series before dramatizing. But the dramatic climax of the whole story is reached when Joseph makes himself known to his brothers.

If each of the Joseph episodes has been dramatized as a unit, it

Egyptian Pottery, Thebes—About 2100 B.C.

Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art

will now be relatively easy to combine the units into a whole. Properties and costuming may be simple or elaborate as the conditions may suggest. The imagination of the children, together with the use of such pictures and descriptions as they can find, will enable them to make the presentation quite realistic.

JACOB IN EGYPT

"GRANDFATHER! Grandfather! They come! They come!"

"Whence come they, my Belah? Do you truly see them?"

"I see them not now, grandfather. They are in the valley which lies beyond the crest of yonder hill. But I did see them descending the slope beyond. Bid me go to meet them to see if they bring good news."

"Nay, nay, my little Belah. Stay you here close beside me. I am old. I have had many sorrows. Mayhap sorrow comes again from this last journey into Egypt. I let Benjamin go. What if he come not again?"

"He will come again, Grandfather. I know it. See them? They top the hill. They come!"

"Now God of my fathers be thanked," murmured Jacob. "They come indeed. Are they all there? Count them, Belah. One, two, three, four. My eyes are old and tear-dimmed. But what bear they among them? What strange things are these?"

But Belah was gone.

"Father," cried a new voice, "Father, we are come home, come with glad tidings, the gladdest in the world!" It was Benjamin who spoke, with his arms around the old man's neck.

"It is enough for me that you are come," said Jacob. "Are ye all come safe with a little food?"

"We are all come safe," chorused many voices, "safe

with food and with glad tidings." And there in the tent were all of Jacob's sons, save one, safely returned from Egypt.

"Speak ye one at a time," said Jacob, "that I may understand."

So Judah came and knelt by his father's side. "I have brought back Benjamin, father, as I said I would, and I have done even more than that. I have tidings of Joseph!"

"Of Joseph!" cried the old man wildly, "Of Joseph, who was devoured by wild beasts? It cannot be."

"It is true, father," said Reuben tenderly. "It was Joseph who, unknown to us, gave us back our money. It was he who inquired so tenderly of us concerning our father, and of Benjamin, his own brother. He is a great, rich man, next in power in Egypt to the Pharaoh."

"Oh, Joseph! Joseph!" cried the old man. "I could never think of thee as dead. What said he? Sent he any message to his old father?"

"Yes, yes," cried Reuben. "See these wagons, loaded with rich gifts? See these beautiful garments? Joseph commanded us, saying, 'Hasten! Bring down my father into Egypt, where I will care for him.'"

"I could not go so far alone," said Jacob.

"Oh, but we are all to go," they cried laughing, "all our children and possessions! We are promised the fat of the land. We tell you, Joseph is the king's favorite. He charged us, saying, 'Regard not thy stuff. Ye shall have the best that Egypt can give.'"

"It is greater than I can understand," said Jacob, sighing. "Begin at the beginning and tell me slowly. How came your brother in Egypt? Ye said a wild beast devoured him? How can I believe you now?"

So, patiently, with shame they told him all, how they had deceived him and sold their brother because they were jealous of him; how he had been bought by Phar-

aoh's servant; how he had won favor through the interpretation of Pharaoh's dream; on and on through the whole marvellous tale, and ended at last with Jacob's question,

"And Joseph forgives you all your cruel treatment?"

"He told us," said Judah humbly, "that we must not blame ourselves, that God has sent him into Egypt to save our lives. He kissed us all as a token of forgiveness."

"Yes," said Jacob, "God rules. His wisdom is above all. Come, we will go down into Egypt. I shall see Joseph! I shall yet see my dearest son, Joseph!"

So they made ready and went quickly. Jacob rode in one of the wagons, the like of which he had never seen before. Like a king he felt, riding while others walked, going to see his son, the ruler, next in power to the Pharaoh of all Egypt!

"Oh, Rachel, Rachel, would thou might have lived to see this day!"

Joseph watched for their coming and when he saw them, he had them brought into his own house. There he greeted them with tears and kisses and many loving words. His father he even brought before the great Pharaoh, saying proudly, "Here is my father!"

The stately ruler of Egypt, looking from his golden throne upon the poor, old shepherd of Hebron, said kindly, "How old art thou?"

"The days of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years. Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life. Wouldst thou accept an old man's blessing?"

The Pharaoh bowed his haughty head before the old man, and Jacob, in his trembling old voice, said,

"The God of my fathers bless thee for thy kindness to a stranger who is old and poor. Out of thee shall come strength and kindness."

Then Joseph drew his father away. But by the Pharaoh's command he set his people to live in the land of Goshen, where there would be rich pasture for their flocks. There, after many happy years, Jacob died and his sons carried him back to Canaan and laid him beside his father and grandfather in the rocky tomb, even the cave of Machpelah which Abraham bought for Sarah.

But before he died, Jacob gave this blessing to each one of his sons:[1]

Assemble and hear, O sons of Jacob,
And listen to Israel your father.

Reuben, thou art my first born,
My strength and the first fruit of my manhood,
Pre-eminent in dignity and strength.
Boiling over like water, thou shalt not be pre-eminent.
. . . . . .

Simeon and Levi are akin,
Weapons of violence are their swords.
Into their council, O my soul, do not enter,
In their assembly, O my heart, do not join.
For men in their anger they slew,
And oxen in their wantonness they hocked.
Accursed is their anger, that it is so fierce,
And their wrath because it is so cruel;
I will divide them in Jacob
And scatter them in Israel.[2]
Judah, thy brothers praise thee!
Thy hand is on the neck of thy enemies,
Before thee thy father's sons bow down.

Jacob's blessing. These are ancient tribal songs or chants. They are prophetic as well as descriptive of Jacob's sons. This arrangement is by Charles Foster Kent in "Founders and Rulers of United Israel," pp. 26-29. (Scribner's.)

[2] **Israel.** Here Jacob refers to himself as Israel, the name thought to have been given him by God. His people were later to be known as Israelites.

Judah is a lion's whelp,
From the prey, my son, thou hast gone up.
. . . . . .
The scepter shall not pass from Judah,
Nor the royal staff from between his feet,
Until that one comes to whom it belongs.
. . . . . .
Benjamin is a ravening wolf,
In the morning he devoureth prey,
And in the evening divideth spoil.

Zebulun, by the sea-shore he dwells;
He is by a shore that is lined with ships,
And his border extends to Sidon.
Issachar, he is a strong-limbed ass,
Crouching down between the sheepfolds;
And when he saw the resting place was good,
That the land also was pleasant,
He bowed his shoulder to bear,
And became a slave under a taskmaster.

Dan is a serpent by the way,
A horned-adder beside the path,
That biteth the horse's heel,
So that his rider falleth backward.
I have waited for thy deliverance, O Jehovah!

Gad, robber bands press upon him,
But he shall also press upon their heel.

Asher, his bread is fatness
And he yields royal dainties.

Naphthali, he is a flourishing terebinth
That sends forth beautiful branches.

Joseph, he is a fruitful branch,
A fruitful branch by a spring,
His tendrils run over the wall.
They bitterly attack, they shoot at him,
. . . . . .

But his bow remains even bent,
His forearms also are supple,
Through the power of the mighty one of Jacob,
In the name of the shepherd of Israel,
Even by the God of thy fathers who ever helpeth thee,
And God Almighty who blesseth thee,
With blessing of heaven above,
And of the great deep that croucheth beneath,

. . . . . .

With blessings of father and mother,
With blessings of the everlasting mountains,
With the gifts of the ancient hills!
They shall be on the head of Joseph,
On the head of the one consecrated among his brothers.

Related Work. Goshen should be located in relationship to the Nile River and other important points by means of making maps for booklets, or by sand-table models or maps.

Ready for a Camel Drive Across the Desert in Arabia

The Nile and Pyramids, Egypt

By Courtesy of Perry Pictures Co., Malden, Mass.

STORIES OF MOSES

THE HEBREWS IN EGYPT

THE Bible says, "There arose in Egypt a king who knew not Joseph." That is, there came a time when Joseph and all that he had done for Egypt were forgotten; but still his people, the Hebrews, lived on in Goshen.

Goshen was that part of Egypt, east of the Nile, which lay between the wady, or river Tumilat and a tributary of the Nile itself. Its eastern border formed Egypt's frontier and was guarded by strong walls and great stone fortresses, garrisoned by Egyptian soldiers. To the west could be seen the great pyramids,[1] the tombs of long dead Pharaohs, and the Sphinx,[2] while on beyond stretched the limitless desert called the Sahara.

This part of the country was quite likely to be overflowed by the rivers in the rainy season and it was, at best, swampy; but it was rich in lush, green grass and that is what shepherds like. They lived in tents or in little mud huts, thatched with reeds and grasses. They did not greatly change nor much improve their ways of living. The proud Egyptians despised them. They were themselves a clannish people who stayed close

[1] **The Pyramids.** These vast stone structures are believed to be the largest and oldest surviving human works. They date from 3000 B.C. or earlier. Their grandeur has not been surpassed. They were intended for use as tombs for the Pharaohs.

[2] **The Sphinx.** The Sphinx is a great stone image with the body of a lion and the face of a woman. Between its great paws is a shrine. The figure may have been the opening to a temple, or it may have been a monument set to guard the entrance into the Nile region.

together. Many of them forgot about Jacob's God and worshipped before household images of the Egyptian gods;[3] but some of them told and retold the tales of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to their children, so keeping alive a little thread of memory and faith in Abraham's God.

We cannot know why in all these years they did not go back to Canaan. Perhaps, the Egyptians would not permit them to do so or perhaps, it was because Goshen was so much more attractive than the mountainous regions of Canaan. They had more and better food[4] and did not have to work so hard. Of course, if they had dreamed that a cruel Pharaoh was going to make them slaves, they would have gone back to Canaan while they were yet free.

[3] **Egyptian gods.** The Egyptians were polytheistic, that is, worshippers of many, many gods. Their chief god was Osiris, the Judge. The king, Ammon, was believed to be a god, the son of Ra. Isis was the wife of Osiris. Besides these they had gods of three orders, eight of the first order, twelve of the second order, and seven of the third order. The eight gods of the first order were Kneph, Ammon, Ptah, Khem, Sate, Mauh, Ra, and Neith.

The gods of the second order were considered to be children of the gods of the first order and parents of the gods of the third order. So Ammon's child was called Khunsu, god of strength; Ptah's child, Pecht, god of birth; Kneph's child, Thoth, god of knowledge. Hather was the goddess of love and Seb was the god of time.

The gods of the third order were those of sun, fire, water, earth, air and destruction.

"The Egyptians were the most religious of all peoples. . . . They believed in a future life, in the transmigration of souls. . . . The worship of variety, the recognition of the divine in nature, the sentiment of wonder before the mystery of the world, the feeling that the Deity is in all life, in all form, in all change as well as in what is permanent and stable, is the best element and the most original part of the Egyptian religion." After Clarke, J. F., in "Ten Great Religions," Chapter VI.

[4] They obtained more and better food with less effort than when living in Canaan. In Egypt they could cultivate the melon, cucumber, lentils, rice, cabbage, and many other vegetables. Meat in the form of fowl and game was abundant. They could have honey, nuts, dates, grapes, raisins, all kinds of delicate pastries, wine, beer, etc.

As it was, they increased in numbers[5] and grew rich. It is probable that they had lived in Goshen more than three hundred years before there came a Pharaoh, Ramses or Rameses II, he was called, who was a great builder of cities and walls and monuments.[6] With so many of these strong Hebrew shepherds among his subjects—foreigners, they were called—he saw no reason why he should not make use of them. So he sent his soldiers to compel them to work at making brick and building cities and walls. Thus were the Hebrews made slaves to the Egyptians. They are in that state when we begin to study about Moses and what he did for his people.

THE PHARAOH'S COMMAND

Lives that are begun in obscure places, lacking in advantages, often rise to greatest heights. Abraham Lincoln was born in a rude cabin, lived all his childhood among poor and ignorant people, but came at last not only to be president of our country, but also the human means of freeing a race of slaves. It is of another man, who lived many centuries before Lincoln but who, like him, led a race out of slavery, that we are going to study. This man's name was Moses.[1] That one word name is all the name by which history knows him. But though we do not know the rest of his name, we do know that he had a tender, pitiful heart for those

[5] **Increase.** It is probable that this increase alarmed the Egyptians and influenced them to make slaves of the Hebrews. It would have been quite possible for the Hebrews to join forces with some outside invaders and so overthrow the government.

[6] Ramses or Rameses II was known as the builder. He built the cities of Pithom and Ramses as well as many monuments and walls by means of slave labor.

[1] **Moses.** His father's name was Amram, his mother's Jochabed, of the house or tribe of Levi.

wronged, a patient, thoughtful mind, and a brave and loyal spirit. He had many strange adventures. Many wonderful things happened to him. He lies buried to-day in a valley of a mountain overlooking Palestine. A beautiful poem has been written about him.

That you may understand his life from the beginning, I must take you first to a palace and show you a king on his throne. It is an Egyptian palace and the king is called Meneptah I. He was probably the greatest, richest king in the world at that time.[2]

We are fortunate enough to live in great, free America where the people make their own laws and choose their own leaders, and we do not know much about kings. But history tells us how this king looked. Imagine him, then, seated upon his throne in a great, stately room, with his ministers and counselors around him. He is tall and dark, like an Indian, with black eyes and straight, black hair. This king is very haughty, cold, cruel, selfish and hard-hearted. He wears a long, purple robe, richly encrusted with jewels that flash in the sunshine. On his head is a jeweled crown: in his hand a scepter, the symbol of his royal blood. This man is absolute monarch over his people: indeed, they believe him

[2] **Egyptian civilization.** Egypt at this time was a very small country, not more than seven miles wide, but sustained a population of seven million people who had reached a high degree of civilization. They knew the length of the sun-year and the form of the earth and could calculate eclipses. They were partially acquainted with geometry, music, chemistry, design, medicine, anatomy, architecture, agriculture and mining. They excelled in architecture. They knew glass, cut glass and blown glass, mosaics, false gems, glazed tile, and enameling. They wrote freely and voluminously with reed pens and ink upon papyrus, also with the stylus on stone and tablets of clay. They were excessively clean as to their bodies. Their government was an absolute monarchy; their religion a lofty polytheism. They had highly developed schools and colleges. It meant much to the Hebrew people to come in contact with such a form of civilization, for they learned a great deal more in this way than they could ever have hoped to gain unaided.

Model of Hypostyle Hall, Temple of Karnak, Egypt—About 1350 B.C.

Note the picture writing upon the columns. Note also the human figure standing near one of the columns. Its size, by comparison, will indicate the immense height and size of the building.

Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art

to be both king and god. He can have men and women and little children tortured or put to death in any way he orders. King Meneptah is a warrior as well as a king, and must fight continually to keep his kingdom. He is the ruler of Egypt, and numbers among his subjects many poor ignorant slaves [3] who till the land, herd the flocks and build lovely temples and gardens and cities.

It is with a matter concerning these slaves that he is holding counsel to-day. The floor of the council hall is of gold, inlaid with precious stones. The walls are hung with splendid curtains of purple and gold. High wainscoting covers the base of the walls, carved with sheaves of lotus bloom and palm leaf.[4] Imagine the king seated there in all his lordly majesty. Over his head is a canopy of gold, through which the sunshine from two small windows pours in its light. So vast is the room and so high the pillars that the sunshine makes only little pools of light here and there. The shadows are heavy and dark. All is silence except for the gentle swaying of the great fans. Now the king, with a slow motion of his hand, says, "Let the high priest speak."

A man glides quietly out of the shadows and prostrates himself before the king. He remains with his head touching the floor until the king says, "Rise! Thou hast tidings, Holy Father?"

"Even so, oh Son of Ptah."

"Say on."

The priest rises and unrolls a scroll, from which he reads:

[3] **Slaves.** The peoples taken captive in warfare were held as slaves. There were very many of these slaves.

[4] **Significance of the lotus and palm.** The Egyptian lotus, a beautiful water lily of two or three different species, symbolized the world, the residence of the gods, and female beauty. It was the favorite flower of the Egyptians, and in hieroglyphics it represents northern Egypt.

The palm was an emblem of victory or rejoicing.

"Great is Osiris. Great is his son, our lord, our prince, our gracious sovereign, Meneptah.

"Many years ago thy father, the noble Pharaoh, befriended and saved from death by famine, a few miserable, nomad Hebrews. One of them, called Joseph, he even made his prime minister. They have repaid his kindness since by treachery and cunning. Though they have lived the pitiable life of slaves they have multiplied and grown to be so many that, were they to unite with some foreign power, they might overthrow even the whole of thy kingdom and usurp thy throne."

The speaker again made obeisance and bowing his way out, was lost in the shadows.

The king remained silent for a little. Then he said, "These are mine own people. Would they revolt against me?"

Then Har-Hat, the first general of the armies, said, "They are a proud people, my lord. They dream of a God who is able to deliver them out of slavery."

"A God greater than Osiris? What folly! Har-Hat, do you fear this God of the Hebrew slaves?"

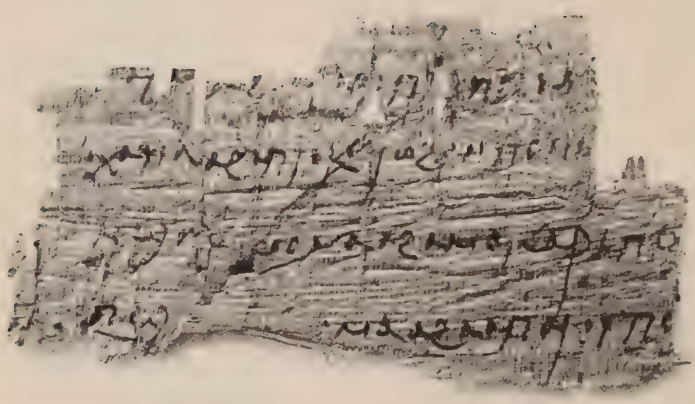
"With the armies of my lord, the Pharaoh, at my command, oh my lord, I will defeat the Hebrews and their God."

Then Meneptah turned to Loi, the high priest, and said, "Holy Father, what is thy counsel?"

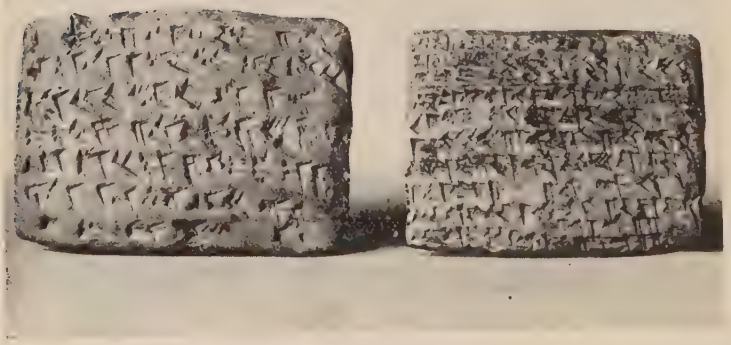
"Osiris shall defend us," said the priest. "Let the Hebrews be put to harder tasks under more cruel taskmasters so that they will not have the strength to increase."

"It hath already been done, and yet do they multiply and grow fat. What sayest thou, my son, my noble Rameses?"

"The Hebrews are a source of great wealth to thee, my noble father. With them thou canst build cities and monuments and great walls to keep out our enemies.



Egyptian Papyrus—Inscription, Greek



Babylonian Writing on Baked Clay Tablets

Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art

But they must not be allowed to grow too strong. Let then our soldiers go among them and kill all the new-born boy babies. That will cut down their numbers."

At this heartless speech all the people clapped their hands and murmured approval.

"Nobly spoken, my son," cried the king. Then turning to Har-Hat, he said, "Har-Hat, it falleth to thy province. Send soldiers throughout the land of Goshen. Seek out all the new-born males. Let not one escape. I, the Pharaoh, have spoken."

As he finished speaking the king rose, and as he rose all the jewels in his dress sparkled and shone in the sunlight. The people began to talk and laugh together. Not one of them seemed sorry for the little new lives that were to be taken.

Related Work. The council scene may be easily and impressively dramatized.

Egyptian writing materials and implements—clay tablets, stylus, papyrus, pens or brushes, and scroll—may be made. Collect pictures of the papyrus plant and other writing materials. To make paper, the Egyptians took the pith of the papyrus plant; smoothed it out flat; made a layer by placing several stalks close together; laying over this another at right angles to the first; and then placing a heavy weight upon the two layers to press them out very flat and to unite them into a firm, single sheet. A natural gum in the plant helped to make it hold firmly together.

A SLAVE'S HOME

We now leave the palace to go to a very different place: a poor little mud hut, almost a cave, beside a river. It is evening, and a little girl—Miriam is her name—is setting out the evening meal. There is a little fire of sticks, and on it simmers a pot. The meal is

simple, thin cakes of bread, a little cheese, and the lentils and onions that are stewing over the fire. It smells very good, however. The setting sun throws long shadows over the river and through the open door. It will soon be night.

The little girls peers anxiously down the road. Suddenly she turns back into the house and laughs joyously. The baby is awake. He is lying on a sheep-skin rug on the floor. As Miriam stoops to take him up he thrusts up his rosy hands and coos.

"Sweet boy," says Miriam, kissing him, "I am so glad you are awakened. It is growing dark, but mother will soon be here." The baby buries his fists in the long dark curls of his sister.

"Come now," says a new voice, "I want my supper. I've been working hard all day."

Miriam springs to her feet. "Yes, Aaron, I know. And supper waits only father and mother. They are very late. Run, wash in the river. I see them coming."

Very soon the little family is seated on the floor. The word of thanks is spoken, and they eat in silence for they are very tired. They are slaves, remember, who have toiled all day in the fierce Egyptian sun, under a master who lashed them with a great whip if they once paused to rest. The baby is content to lie in his mother's arms. You could tell she loves him by the gentle, careful way she holds him. Soon the food is all gone. Then the father looks at the baby and says,

"A soldier came to-day and I heard him talking with our master."

"Of what spoke they, Father?" said Miriam.

"Of thy baby brother, child."

"Of this new and innocent one?" cried the mother in quick alarm. "What could they say of him?"

"Little brother!" cried Aaron, who had been almost asleep in the corner. "They better not touch him!"

"Oh, Father," said Miriam, "what said they of him?"

They were all pale and trembling. It was dark now and the mother rose, with the tiny boy in her arms, and lit the lamp of oil.

"Speak!" she commanded. "What new and terrible suffering can be in store for us, we who have so long known what misery it is to be slaves?"

"The God of our fathers protect us," answered the father. "They plan now—it is, indeed, the Pharaoh's command—that every new-born male child of our race shall be put to death. The soldiers will come. He will peer in at our door and seeing our baby, our precious little one, snatch him away and throw him into the river. The little life will be gone forever! Ai! Ai! Our God has forsaken us!"

The father stoops low and throws ashes over his head and hides his face in his arms.

"Oh, Mother, Mother, say it is not true!" cries Miriam.

"It is only too true, little daughter. But do not despair. We will think of some way to save our baby. In him," she adds solemnly, "shall all mankind be blessed."

"As soon as it is light, my daughter, run thou and bring me reeds from the river. We will weave a basket and in it we will put our baby. We will set him adrift on the river. And who knows? Our God careth for his own. Thou, little Miriam, shall watch and bring me word. We shall outwit the cruel king."

Tired out, they all slept all night; but with the first light of dawn Miriam and Aaron went creeping down to the river and came back with arm loads of pliant reeds. With these they fashioned a wide, rude basket. In it they put a soft lamb's skin; but first they daubed it with clay to keep out the water. After they wrapped the sleeping child in his own warm robe, they placed him

in the basket. Then, all together, they stole down to the river's bank. With many kisses and tears they set the little ark adrift. The baby slept; and quickly they stole away, all but Miriam, who stayed, hidden in the bushes, to watch what might come.

Related Work. A model of a slave's home may be made from the description, showing the house by the river, or, a picture of it may be drawn or painted upon paper.

The ark for Moses may be woven of grass or reeds, or a suitable basket may be adapted to the purpose and a doll used for the baby, Moses.

A PRINCESS FINDS MOSES

First to come was a group of slaves on their way to work. A soldier walked ahead and the morning sun glittered on his sword. Miriam thought—"one thrust of his sword and the little life will be gone out forever."

"Oh, not that! Not that!" she cried.

But the slaves passed on. Then came a stately stranger on a camel and stopped to let the beast drink. "What," thought Miriam, "if he should carry my little brother away into a far country where we could never see him again! Oh, not that! Not that!"

But the stately stranger passed on. Then came another sound: a group of lovely girls. They were laughing and talking. Their bracelets and anklets made a merry tinkle as they walked. And in their midst was a princess, a real princess, the Pharaoh's daughter.[1] Miriam rubbed her eyes in amazement. "Oh," she thought, "I hope the princess finds my little brother!" She was so excited that she moved restlessly in her hid-

[1] **The princess.** Thermuthis, or Bint Anat, was the favorite daughter of Rameses II.

Goodall

Rebecca (See p. 49)

Delaroche

The Finding of Moses

By Courtesy of Perry Pictures Co., Malden, Mass.

ing place; but you may be sure she never took her eyes for long from the tiny ark as it floated in the still water.

The princess was languid that morning. She was in no hurry. She was, I think, very beautiful, and as good as she was fair. I imagine she was only a young girl; but of course a king's daughter is a princess the day she she is born.

"I will not bathe just now," she said to her maidens. "I will sit here in the shade."

They made a place for her with cushions and rugs, and she sat in the shade of the palm trees. So sitting, she could look out over the river. It was very beautiful in the morning sunshine. Suddenly she shaded her eyes with her hand and looked intently at one spot. She said, "What is that yonder in the water? It looks like a little boat. Wade in," she commanded, for all the world like her royal father, 'and bring it to me."

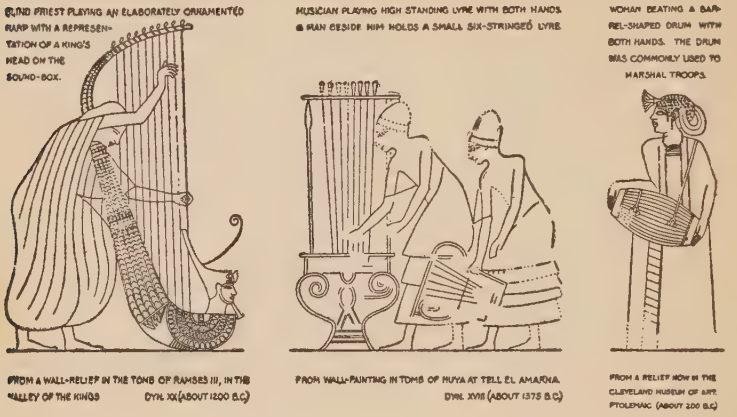
Then all the girls waded into the river and caught the little ark and brought it back to the princess. She turned back the robe and cried, 'Why, it is a baby, a dear little baby boy! How wonderful! He shall be my baby! Oh, girls, what fun! I shall call him Moses,[2] because I drew him out of the water."

Now, up to this time baby Moses had been very good. He looked up into the sweet face of the princess and laughed and cooed. No one could resist such a sweet baby. But now, for some reason, he puckered up his little lips and began to cry. Perhaps he was frightened at so many girls. Perhaps he was hungry. At any rate, some one said, "It will be lovely to keep him, but won't you have to have a nurse?"

Little Miriam, hidden in the bulrushes, had listened

[2] **Moses.** The Hebrew word for Moses means, drawn out of the water. The Egyptian equivalent of Moses is Mosheh, or Messu, meaning Son.

to all this conversation very eagerly and had been creeping nearer and nearer. When she heard someone speak


BLIND PRIEST PLAYING AN ELABORATELY ORNAMENTED HARP WITH A REPRESENTATION OF A KING'S HEAD ON THE SOUND-BOX.
FROM A WALL-RELIEF IN THE TOMB OF RAMSES III, IN THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS DYN. XX (ABOUT 1200 B.C.)
MUSICIAN PLAYING HIGH STANDING LYRE WITH BOTH HANDS. A MAN BESIDE HIM HOLDS A SMALL SIX-STRINGED LYRE.
FROM WALL-PAINTING IN TOMB OF HUYA AT TELL EL AMARNA. DYN. XVIII (ABOUT 1375 B.C.)
WOMAN BEATING A BARREL-SHAPED DRUM WITH BOTH HANDS. THE DRUM WAS COMMONLY USED TO MARSHAL TROOPS.
FROM A RELIEF NOW IN THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART. PTOLEMAIC (ABOUT 200 B.C.)
FLUTE PLAYER
FROM WALL-RELIEF FROM TOMB OF RYKHMÔR AT SAKKARA, NOW IN THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART. DYN. V (ABOUT 2700 B.C.)
MUSICIANS PLAYING (1) DOUBLE FLUTE, EACH REED PIPE HAVING TWO FINGER HOLES (2) THREE-STRINGED LUTE PLAYED WITH A PLECTRUM (3) GREAT HARP WITH FOURTEEN STRINGS, ITS SOUND-BOX COVERED WITH LEOPARD'S SKIN.
FROM A WALL-PAINTING IN THE TOMB OF NAKHT AT THEBES DYN. XVIII (ABOUT 1425 B.C.)
GIRL PLAYING SMALL HARP WHICH RESTS ON HER SHOULDER.
FROM A WALL-RELIEF IN A TOMB AT EL KAB. DYN. XII (ABOUT 2000–1788 B.C.)
BLIND SINGER ACCOMPANYING HIMSELF ON A SIX-STRINGED HARP WHICH ENDS ABOVE IN A FEMALE HEAD. BLIND SINGERS WERE ALWAYS POPULAR AMONG THE EGYPTIANS.
FROM WALL-PAINTING IN THE TOMB OF NAKHT, THEBES. DYN. XVIII (ABT. 1485 B.C.)

Musical Instruments of Early Egypt
Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art

of a nurse for the baby she said, "I know where a good nurse may be found."

"Do you?" said the princess. "Run quickly, then, and fetch her to us, for I believe this poor little one is hungry."

How Miriam ran! She ran straight to her own mother and told her all the wonderful tale.

"Mother! Mother!" she cried. "The princess has found little brother and I am sent to find a nurse. Come quickly and we shall have our baby back again in safety!"

"The God of our fathers be praised!" answered the mother. "Come!"

Running swiftly, they soon reached the place where the princess and her maidens waited. When the princess saw Miriam coming with a woman to care for the baby, she asked no questions but said, "Take this child and nurse him for me, and I will pay thee thy wages."

Moses' mother took him tenderly in her arms and turned away. But as she turned, the princess said, "Come to-night to the palace with the child Moses. He shall be my child. Thee and thy children shall dwell in the palace and care for him. I am the Pharaoh's daughter. He shall be as a prince of Egypt."

And it came to pass just as the princess said. Miriam and Aaron and the mother went to live for a while in the king's palace, and Moses became the son of a princess.

Dramatization. This story, including the incidents related in the preceding story, may be easily and effectively dramatized.

IN THE KING'S PALACE

Little Moses was but three months old when the princess, Thermuthis, rescued him from death and adopted him to be her son. No longer as the son of slaves was he to be known, but as a prince of Egypt, foster-brother to Rameses, the Crown Prince. It was not likely therefore, that his father and mother, his sister and brother, would remain common slaves either.

That would be too humiliating to Moses and his adopted mother, the princess. So his real mother became his nurse and went to live at the palace. Miriam became a lady-in-waiting to the princess and Aaron and his father were removed from the quarries and put at more dignified forms of labor.

But, though they lived an easier life, they were Hebrews still and in their hearts were loyal and loving to their own people. Though they lived in the king's house, one and all around them were worshipping false gods, they still believed in and worshipped the one, true God. The "Living God," they called Him.

I am sure Moses' mother—his real mother, I mean—was very thankful that God had been so very good to her. He had not only saved her baby from death at the hands of the soldiers or from drowning in the Nile River, but had placed him in a position where there were great opportunities. And to crown all His goodness, He had made it possible for her to be with him and care for him and teach him. So in her gratitude, she tried very hard to teach Moses about his own people and their religion, that he might use his education and the power of his position to help them in the years to come.

Imagine them, then, sitting together by some lovely fountain at twilight, when the stars are coming out overhead. Aaron and Miriam are there, too. They are all clothed in soft, white, beautiful garments, and all around them is beauty. But their hearts are sad.

"Tell me, Mother," said little Moses, from his soft nest in her arms, "how many stars are there?"

"Too many to count, little one. But our God hath promised that our seed shall be as the stars in number."

"Am I a seed, Mother?"

"Thou art indeed, my little Moses, the seed of Abraham. Such great deeds have been done already to pro-

tect and preserve thy life that I believe God must have special tasks for thee."

"Do tell us a story, Mother," pleaded Aaron, "a true story about our own people."[1]

"Thou hast heard them all already."

"Yes, but tell them again!"

"Well, then, I will tell you how once we were not slaves, but free people, free to travel whither we would. We tended our flocks and gathered our harvests and called no man master. God ruled us and in a hundred places in our land our fathers built altars and worshipped Him. We were happy and free."

"Don't cry, Mother," said little Moses.

"Then came famine," went on the mother, wiping away her tears. "The rains did not come at the right time. Our crops perished and our cattle died. We were forced to leave our own country and come here to Egypt. Our kinsman, Joseph, had found favor in the eyes of Egypt's king and he befriended us. Then Joseph died and his master, the kind Pharaoh, died. Then came kings who wronged our people. They took away our homes and flocks. They made us work for them until we, who are sprung of free men, became a race of slaves, bound in the galleys and mines and quarries, sweating and groaning under the task-master's stinging lash."

"But we have hope, Mother," cried Miriam. "Tell us about our hope."

"You speak the truth, child. We have hope. For when we became slaves to the wicked Pharaoh, our God did not desert us. 'He that watcheth over Israel neither

[1] **Story or tradition.** In such fashion as Moses' mother told her children the stories of her people and their faith, were all these records kept and handed down from generation to generation. None of these stories which we are reading was written until many, many years had passed away. This accounts for the fact that we have two and sometimes three distinct versions of similar events. These versions do not always harmonize.

slumbers nor sleeps.' Give heed, little changeling prince, and thou, too, Miriam and Aaron! It hath been prophesied by our wise men that there shall one arise who shall lead his people out of Egypt, back into that land which is flowing with milk and honey, back where we shall be happy and free forever. Some child, perhaps a child now living, shall, when he is a man, avenge his people's wrongs, shall defy the Egyptians and lead us all to freedom."

"My princess mother," said little Moses, "says I am to be a priest to Osiris. Shall I, Mother?"

"Thou art in the hands of our God, little son. But remember this, if thou comest to occupy a high place. Thy people suffer. Thy little kinsmen toil and sweat and die under the lash of Egypt. Speak thou for them in the high places. Remember thou art a Hebrew though thou wearest a purple robe. God shall require of thee greatness."

During all the years he lived in the palace, Moses kept all his mother had said in his heart and thought about it earnestly.

MOSES FLEES FROM EGYPT

MANY years have passed since we saw Moses in the arms of the Egyptian princess and, later, beside his mother, listening to her stories of their people. During all these years he lived at the king's palace and was treated as the king's son. He was trained to the priesthood of the Egyptian god, Osiris. He was well educated.[1] But though Moses wore soft, beautiful clothing

[1] **Moses' education.** It is said that Moses was sent to the Egyptian University and was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. This would mean a knowledge of reading and writing, some understanding

and ate at the king's table, and studied instead of working, we know he never forgot his own people, but was always sorry for them and tried to help them. This was the direct cause of the great change that now came over his life.

SCRIBE WITH A PALETTE UNDER HIS ARM STANDING BEFORE A WRITING TABLE ON WHICH ARE A POT FOR WATER AND TWO WRITING TABLETS.
SCRIBE WRITING WITH A REED BRUSH ON A SLIP OF WOOD. HE CARRIES A LONG NARROW PALETTE IN A CASE UNDER HIS RIGHT ARM. IN THE END OF THE PALETTE THERE ARE TWO CIRCULAR DEPRESSIONS FOR PAINT, IN THE CENTER A GROOVE TO HOLD A SET OF REED BRUSHES.
WITH A BRUSH OVER EACH EAR AND A PALETTE WITH TWO CIRCULAR DEPRESSIONS FOR PAINT IN HIS LEFT HAND THE SCRIBE STANDS READY TO SUBMIT HIS MANUSCRIPT.
FROM WALL-RELIEFS IN THE TOMB OF KAGEMNI AT SAKKARA. DYN. V (ABOUT 2750-2625 B.C.)
FROM A WALL-RELIEF IN A MASTABA-TOMB AT GIZEH. DYN. IV (ABOUT 2900-2750 B.C.)

Egyptian Scribes

Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art

"By my faith," cried young Benjamin, "I believe my back is broken. The task-master is so far away on the other side of the field that I will rest just a little. The stubble is so short I can scarce fill my bag, but the straw

of arithmetic, astronomy and geometry, some knowledge of law and its administration, and a great deal of astrology, magic, and information about the gods of Egypt. This education fitted him for leadership, and since he was loyal to his own people, the Hebrews, enabled him to do much for them.

must be found and our full measure of brick turned in to-night, or all will suffer."

Rising only to his knees, he straightened his tired back and looked away to the distant river, shining in the sun. All around him were fields of straw and stubble left by the reapers. It was his task to gather straw and carry it to the brick-makers. Poor little Benjamin had been at work since early morning. At first it had been cool and pleasant and the straw more plentiful. Then the sun grew hotter and hotter. The sandy soil burned his bare feet. The sun beat down upon his bare back. At noon he had eaten a cake of hard bread and drunk the last of his tepid water; but still he toiled on, not daring to pause or even look up. For every ten toilers in the field there was one task-master, a man with a long, cruel whip, whose duty it was to keep the slaves hard at work. Now it was near evening and the task-master, himself weary, was a little less watchful.

Benjamin had meant to rest only one moment, but the pain in his back was so sharp that he could hardly straighten up. But it was not the pain alone that kept him from his task. His eyes were held by the sight of a man approaching. He was a tall man, richly dressed in a white robe, loosely girdled. On his feet were leather sandals, on his head a cloth of gold, embroidered in a design which showed him to be an inmate of the royal house.

Straight he came across the field to Benjamin, and the poor fellow was so surprised that he could only stare. He was frightened, too, and made as though he would gather more straw. But his poor back was too stiff, and when he would have stooped again he fell, face downward, in the dust. He lay there trembling until he heard a kind voice saying, "Thou art overspent. Drink this," while a strong, tender arm was thrust under his shoulders and lifted him. The drink was cool

and refreshing and poor Benjamin, looking up into the kind pitying eyes, thought himself in heaven at least, since no earthly voice had ever been so kind.

"Who art thou?" he stammered.

"I am Moses, thy kinsman, he whom men call the foster-brother of the Pharaoh."

"Thou art too great to stoop to such as I. I am only a poor, Hebrew slave."

"I, too, am a Hebrew," answered Moses, "and my heart burns with pity for thee and all my people. I would help thee." And again the strong, gentle arms lifted him and he drank of the cold, refreshing water in the flask.

"Tell me—" he began, but broke off with a cry of alarm and sprang to his feet.

"Idling again, thou lazy dog! Take that, and that!" and the lash of the task-master's whip fell across the slave's shoulders. "Thrice have I found thee loitering. Now I will teach thee the virtue of obedience, else will I leave thy worthless body to the dogs!" Under the pitiless blows poor Benjamin sank down flat against the earth. His naked, defenseless body quivered and shook; the blood sprang forth.

"Stop!" cried Moses. "In the name of the Pharaoh I command thee!"

"Who are thou to command obedience? A deserter from the ranks of thine own people! A Hebrew whom the Pharaoh tolerates because of the whim of his gentle daughter! Out of my way, that I at least may be a true Egyptian!"

From under his long robe Moses had drawn a short sword. In his pale face his great, dark eyes shone with a fierce light. The task-master, intent upon his cruel work, looked up too late. One swift, skillful thrust, and he sank to the ground and died without a sound. For a long moment Moses and the bleeding, prostrate slave

gazed upon the still body. Then Moses turned and said, "Now, God of my fathers! I have killed when I meant not murder, only pity for the defenseless. Seest thou anyone, brother, who might have seen the act?"

The poor slave lifted himself upon his elbow and cried out, "Praise be to thee, most kind and powerful one! No eye but mine hath seen the deed. Cover him there with the sand and go thy way. As God lives, I thank thee, and all our people shall give thanks that one lives in places of power whose heart is still tender for the wrongs of his own."

"But if this is known," answered Moses, "I must flee Egypt. Else will I be put to death."

"Flee if thou must," answered Benjamin. "Go only beyond the Pharaoh's walls where thou canst abide in safety. But come thou again, and lead us all to safety. All thy people perish, even as I. It may be thou canst save us all."

"We will watch then," said Moses. "God be with thee! Jehovah forefend thee!"

As Moses walked quickly away he recalled the scornful words of the Egyptian,—"Thou art one tolerated by the Pharaoh." In his heart he knew how little authority he held; how secretly he was despised by all save his kind princess. He realized his own danger.[2] This was made clearer to him next day, when he sought to make peace between two quarreling Hebrews. One answered him and said, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?"

Then Moses knew that he must leave Egypt or lose all chance to help his people. He knew that some one

[2] **Moses' danger.** The Egyptians despised the Hebrews as an inferior race, so it was not surprising that the reigning Pharaoh should not himself really share his daughter's love of Moses. His fate, if he were caught, would have been death, or at least imprisonment for life.

had informed the king that he had killed the task-master. Had Benjamin betrayed him? Surely not! Yet who else knew? He hastened back to the palace and shut himself into his own room. There he paced up and down, thinking out what it were best to do. Must he leave Egypt a fugitive, dishonored and penniless? Must he desert his own people altogether? Surely he could not do that! Why had education been given to him and understanding if not to help his own? Out there in the desert, to which he must flee, how could he help them?

"Oh God, guide me!" he cried. "What must I do? Why did I kill the Egyptian? Yet, must I not defend a man too weak to defend himself? God of my fathers, teach me; lead me!" As he knelt, praying, a knock was heard on his door.

"Open, in the name of the Pharaoh!" cried a harsh voice.

"It is come," thought Moses.

When the door was opened a soldier entered and said, "Thou art commanded to attend the Pharaoh. At midnight the court convenes. See thou to it."

The man's look was insolent, his voice rough and cold. Moses knew that what little show of respect had formerly been given him was now to be withdrawn. The Pharaoh now had the pretext which he had been seeking to condemn him. In some underground dungeon he would end his life, or be put to hard labor in the mines or quarries as a criminal. He thought of appealing to his adopted mother. She had always been a friend to him. But no, even she could not save him. He thought of his own father and mother. They, too, would perish. Long had the Pharaoh hated him.

"God save me! God deliver me out of their hands!" he prayed. Even as he prayed another knock was heard on the door. "It is the soldier returning," thought

Moses. But as he opened the door he saw only a slave-boy, who bowed low before him.

"Master! Master!" the boy cried. "I am come from thine own people. "I am that Benjamin whom thou saved from the Egyptian."

"Come not to me for help. I am as well as condemned already. The Pharaoh knows all."

"We know it well, master," replied the slave. "Thy sister, Miriam, heard the princess pleading for thee. Even her prayers are of no avail. Thy life is forfeit."

As he listened Moses' face changed. A look of confidence replaced the look of fear. He lifted himself proudly; his dark eyes shone. "Did God save me for this? Will He, who hath directed my life, desert me now?"

"Not so," answered the slave. "I have here a disguise sent by thy sister. Don it quickly. Midnight approaches. A horse awaits thee at the city's gate. Flee out of Egypt.[3] The princess, thy foster-mother, sends her greetings and bids thee haste."

"I go," answered Moses. "Tell my mother and my sister farewell. I go; but I shall return! And when I come again, not even the Pharaoh shall stand against the power which I shall bring with me. God bless thee, and farewell!"

Related Work. Bricks may be made of clay, some with straw or grass in them, some without, to show how much more firmly they hold together with the straw or grass. Compare the use of reinforcing in concrete with the use of straw in bricks. The bricks used in those

[3] **Out of Egypt.** Moses fled to Midian, a country on the borders of Edom, inhabited by nomad tribes who may have had the same ancestors as Moses himself. To reach this country, however, he had to travel through a desert region of copper and malachite mines controlled by Egypt and guarded by her soldiers. These mines were operated by Egyptian convict labor and, if Moses had been arrested, he would probably have been put at hard labor in them for the rest of his life.

days were sun-dried. When we burn bricks as we do today to harden them, no straw or grass is needed.

Locate the countries of Midian and Edom to indicate about where Moses lived after his flight from Egypt.

MOSES IN THE WILDERNESS

THERE is no more beautiful sight in the world than a well in a desert place.[1] All around are barren hills. A wilderness of sand and scrub brush stretch away on either hand. The sunshine, that in our favored land seems so welcome, here beats down with a scorching heat almost past endurance. Even the wind is unbearably hot. No birds sing. But in pleasing contrast around the well that patient hands have dug with infinite labor and walled and cemented to keep out the sand, is a little spot of green. A few trees lift their heads and shed a little grateful shade.

In one of these lovely spots a traveller has stopped to rest. Utterly weary, he leans against a tree, and with dark, sorrowful, brooding eyes gazes back over the desert trail he has so painfully followed. He is dressed as an Egyptian, in a short, dark garment that falls to the knees. On his feet are very much worn sandals. His head is uncovered, except for the long dark hair that falls about his neck. Over his shoulders, caught under one arm by a girdle, is a heavy cloak, a royal cloth that was once fit for a prince but that is now torn and soiled. It has served as his traveller's couch and covering during over two hundred miles of the loneliest desert wandering. In his girdle is thrust a short, sharp knife, and beside him, on the sand, is a cudgel of wood

[1] **An oasis.** An oasis is formed in a desert by a natural spring or a well that has been dug. It is marked by a few palm trees and a little green grass.

fit to slay a lion. He has eaten almost the last of his food, a little hard cheese and a small cake of dried figs, and drunk of the refreshing water of the well. But he sits listlessly, as one who sick at heart in a far and desolate place, dreams of home and loved ones.

This poor traveller is that Moses who, to protect the helpless victim, slew the task-master and was forced to leave Egypt to escape the vengeance of the Pharaoh. He has become a wanderer, alone, without earthly friends. At times perhaps, since he is only human, his faith in God burns low, like the light of a feeble lamp almost burned out.

He is not left alone by the well very long. In the distance a group of women is seen approaching and behind them a flock of sheep.

"They are coming to water their sheep," thought Moses "I will hide, since they might betray me."

The clear, high voices of the girls—for they were only girls—came to him on the thin air.

"Come!" cried one, more alert than the others. "We have beaten those lazy men again. We will draw water and get away before they come."

"Oh, who will lift the heavy stone? It will break my back!"

"Thy back is too tender. Haste, for the men come. Then they will let their sheep drink the water we have drawn and we will have to stand in the sun and wait."

"I would I were a man," cried another. "I vow I would break their heads."

While they talked they worked, each in turn drawing a pail of cool water and empyting it into the trough.

"Now there is enough. Let the sheep come."

But they were too late. A group of half-clad, wild looking men came rushing up, followed by another flock of sheep.

"Hi, my pretty maidens! Just in time to save us much hard labor! Call back thy mangy sheep. Our flocks are thirsty."

With clubs and rods and lusty howls they beat back the sheep of the women.

"Halt, ye unmannerly bullies!"

At the voice the men dropped their clubs in alarm and the women drew together in a group, holding on to each other in amazement. Who was this commanding stranger who took their defense into his own hands? Few soldiers, armed and trained to combat, could have withstood the bold advance and stout blows which Moses dealt about him. The shepherds fell back with shouts and curses. Then Moses turned to the trembling women and said, "I am a poor and friendless stranger, but oppression ever maketh my blood boil. Water now thy flocks in safety. I will keep the men back."

When the sheep had drunk and the men, in silence, had drawn water for their sheep and gone away, Moses again seated himself wearily, as one who thinks to himself, "One place is as good as another. I will stay here."

But one of the girls, Zipporah, running ahead of her sisters, sought out her father.

"Thou art home early, my child."

"Yea, Father. A gracious stranger, an Egyptian, helped us to draw and drove away the rude men."

"A gracious stranger! And thou hast left him unthanked! Thou art unmannerly! Run! Bid him, in my name, rest and eat."

So Zipporah ran back to the well, half fearing that the stranger would be gone. But though it was almost dark, Moses sat by the well. At sight of him Zipporah's courage almost failed her. He seemed so wonderfully fine, so brave and still, so sad and lonely.

"My father sent me," she began timidly.

"Thy father!" said Moses. "Bid him farewell. I go. Peace be with thee."

"But he would thank thee for thy kindness to his daughters. He bids thee come, eat and rest."

Something in her sweet face touched his heart. And her errand was the offer of gratitude and companionship and rest for a little while at least.

"My father is a priest," said Zipporah softly.

"A priest!" cried Moses. "I, too—" But he paused. "I will stay for a little with thee," he went on, "if thou wilt welcome a friendless one, weary of the desert, of loneliness, almost of life."

"Thou art welcome," said Zipporah softly. "Come, bathe thy feet and rest. The servants will bring food and wine."[2]

Related Work. A sand-table desert and wilderness scene with an oasis may be made of great help in getting a clearer notion of the geography and general character of the region to which Moses fled. Make maps showing the travels of Moses.

The scene at the well may be drawn or painted by some children.

MOSES MAKES A GREAT DECISION

If a novelist had set the hero of his story down alone and friendless in a desert place and he had found at once a powerful friend, a home, and a gentle, loving girl to be his wife, we would smile and say, "Yes, things happen like that in stories."

As Moses walked through the warm desert dusk with the great friendly stars glowing above him and Zipporah beside him, he came to a kind, powerful friend and a good home. Zipporah's father was perhaps the

[2] **Hospitality.** Hospitality was a law of the desert. The life of the traveller in its inhospitable wastes often depended upon it.

only man in all that desert country who would have understood and welcomed Moses. He was a priest of Midian, called Jethro, or Reuel. It turned out that he and Moses had in some measure the same religious faith. Possibly he was in some far-off way related to Moses, or at least of the same race. Possibly he was one of the descendants of those Hebrews who, on the way to Egypt during the great famine, made for themselves homes by the way and prospered while their brethren went on into what lengthened out into a long period of suffering. We can only speculate as to the real character of the relationship. It is certain that their religious faith was similar.

As Moses drew near the tents of Jethro, the old man came out to meet him. He was clothed all in white, with the white head dress of the high priest. Holding out his hands in welcome, he said,

"Enter, and the peace of Jehovah abide in thy heart."

The gentle, courteous words, simple as they were, surprised Moses. Hospitality he knew to be a law of the desert, but welcome in the name of his God was as unexpected as it was gratifying.

Bowing low, he made answer, "The God of our fathers hath guided my ignorant footsteps to Himself. Thou speakest a welcome as sweet as pardon to the ears of the condemned, in the name of that God whose goodness hath not forsaken me."

Far into the night the two men talked, finding in each other kindred faith and like ambition, until at last Jethro rose and said,

"No experience of our lives is without meaning. Though thou art now homeless and seemingly friendless, still must thou not despair. Dwell with us here in this quiet place and await the unfolding of thy destiny. God rules."

So Moses, not knowing what better could be done,

consented. He who had been a dweller in a palace became a dweller in a tent. He who had been bred to study and elegant leisure became a shepherd. He wore skins for clothing and went sandal-shod through the burning sands. He fought with wild beasts to protect his flocks. He had no hopes for the future. He felt stranded there in a little pocket of the hillside, an outcast, a sheep-herder, a deserter from his own people.

Only Zipporah comforted him. She did not understand; but she loved him and was so kind to him that Moses came to love her in return and they were married. Then Moses was happier; but he still dreamed of Egypt. Lying near his sheep and gazing up into the deep blue sky, he dreamed and prayed. Always the memory of his people grieved his heart. "They suffer," he thought. "They suffer and die. There is no future before them but pain and hard work. Oh, God save them! Lead them to freedom! Fulfill thy promise to our father Abraham and lead thy chosen people out of bondage."

As he lay one day, lost in this old sad dream and prayer, suddenly a bush near him seemed to glow as if on fire. Startled, he sat erect. "How strange! I am awake. A bush burneth yet is not consumed. What can be the meaning?"

As he wondered and hesitated, he heard a voice so clearly as to seem real, that said, "Moses! Moses!"

And he said, "Here am I."

"Draw not nigh," the voice continued. "Put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place in which thou standeth is holy ground. I am thy God."

Now Moses hid his face, for he was afraid. But the voice went on.

"I have seen the afflictions of thy people in Egypt. I know their sorrows. I am come to lead them out of Egypt into a good, rich land in which they can be free.

Now therefore I will send you unto Pharaoh that you may bring forth my people. I will be with thee. I will teach thee. I will sustain thee."

Though Moses had prayed a thousand times for his loved ones, he had never dreamed that it was within his power to take them from the great, powerful king of Egypt. It seemed an impossible task. He began to make excuses. He had prayed, as we all pray, "Send us a leader," and when it dawned upon him that he must be the leader, he was frightened.

"I do not know thee. Whom shall I say sent me?"

"I am that I am," answered the voice. "Say to my people, 'the great I AM hath sent me.' "

"The Pharaoh will not let them go."

Poor Moses! Like all the rest of us, he was willing to argue with God as He urges us each in our own turn to noble purposes.

"I will stretch out my hand and smite Egypt with my wonders. Then he will let them go."

But Moses said, "They will not believe me."

And God said, Show them wonders. Turn thy rod into a snake. Restore the leprous hand. Change water into blood."

Moses said, They will not believe me. I,—I am a slow man, a dumb man. I cannot talk well. I could never persuade the Egyptians, or even my own people."

Then God replied in anger, Let then thy brother Aaron go with thee. He hath an eloquent tongue. He shall speak, and thou shalt be to him as God."

So, after long thought, after many anxious fears, after prayers and tears, Moses took, as it were, his life in his hands and went back into Egypt. Aaron was directed to go to meet him, and the two brothers entered together the land from which Moses had been absent nearly forty years.

MOSES RETURNS TO EGYPT

Two Hebrew slaves were working in the stone quarries, each lifting and letting fall his hammer with a rhythmic swing; yet one managed to speak to the other without attracting the attention of the overseer.

"Hist, Simeon! Hast heard the news?"

"Nay. What is it, Laban?"

"There is a meeting to-night."

"To-night? Where?"

"Here, in this place. Yonder where thou seest that great stone but partly dislodged. Behind it is a cave in the rock. The moon is new and sheddeth but a pale light. The shadows are heavy. Many may hide in that dark cave."

"I cannot come. I am afraid."

"Not come, man! Thou must be sure to come. There are great plans afoot. Moses hath returned."

"Moses! Who is Moses?"

"Art thou an Israelite and yet must repeat in such dull fashion, 'Moses! Who is Moses?' I'll tell thee, then. Moses is that great Hebrew whom the Pharaoh harbored in his palace because his daughter had a fondness for him. Later he was compelled to flee because his heart was too tender towards his own people."

"We are his own people. Was his heart, then, too tender towards us?"

"Yes, stupid one. He has never forgotten his own and now he comes to tell us how we can escape out of Egypt and all this cruel drudgery."

"Comes he then with an army to meet the armies of the Pharaoh?"

"Nay. He comes, so he says, armed with the power of God, our fathers' God, who hath seen our suffering

and taken pity on us. But come thou to-night. He hath a convincing manner though his speech is slow. He will make all things clear to thee."

"Peace! The master approacheth. I will come."

So, all over Egypt where the Hebrews dwelt and labored the news was passed from lip to lip, until every man heard that Moses had returned and was prepared to show them the way to escape. In countless lonely places at night, sometimes in utter darkness, Moses and Aaron were calling together little groups of the people, telling them of their plan, urging them to be ready to go, trying to waken in them ambition and revive their half-forgotten faith in God. For, while all their hearts bled with their sufferings as slaves, few of them had any idea of escaping or any idea that any better lot was to be theirs than slavery. They all lived in daily abject terror of the Egyptians.

Now it is night, black night, with only the stars and a pale, little, new moon low in the sky. In the loneliest spot in the quarries, among the half-loosened rock, a few men and women are crouched, listening to a man talk. The man is Moses. He is telling them about that day on the mountain when he saw the bush that glowed as with fire, yet was not consumed. His voice is low and earnest. The people listen eagerly.

"Thoughts of you, my own people, who have suffered so long and so cruelly under this wicked Egyptian, have always lain heavy upon my heart. I was free and happy; but when I remembered your sorrows I could not rest. I could think of no way to help you, for the Pharaoh is strong. His forts and soldiers guard every border city. But as I lay and wished and longed to be able to help, suddenly I saw a bush begin to glow with a brightness greater than that of the sun, though it was noontide and the sun shone at his full strength."

A little sigh rises from his listeners and one old man,

lifting his pale face to the moonlight, half whispers, "The God of Israel still lives."

"Aye, it was God," continues Moses. "He spoke to me and when I would have hidden my face in fear, commanded me, saying, 'I am that God whom thy fathers worshipped, the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob. I have seen and heard how my people suffer and my heart is tender with compassion towards them.' "

Some of his hearers are crying now. They know only too well how they have suffered. But Moses went on. "God told me that He had determined to send you help. There is a fair and lovely country lying beyond this wilderness. It is green with grass for our flocks. It has deep wells of sweet water. It has green trees for shade and purple hills for beauty. It is rich in fruits and grains. If you will have faith in God and in me, if you will trust me and obey me, I will show you the way out of Egypt, across the desert into a wonderful Promised Land[1] that shall be a home for you and your children forever. There ye shall be free men. There your children shall have a chance to grow strong and beautiful. Each one of you shall have his own home in some quiet valley or hill country and worship God in his own way. Will you go? Will you trust God and follow me?"

Then every man and woman stood up, forgetting their fears of the task-master, and cried out, "As God lives, we will follow thee. Show us the way!"

"I go then," cried Moses gladly, "as your spokesman,

[1] **The Promised Land.** Moses had in mind the land now known as Palestine, so named from the Philistines, strong, warlike tribes of people who lived there. This land was then known as Canaan, where Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had lived. It was thought of as the promised land because God had promised it to the descendants of Abraham. Many fierce tribes, however, already occupied it, living in walled cities. This would make it necessary for the Israelites to acquire the land by conquest.

to the Pharaoh. He dare not deny me a hearing. I shall ask him that we all be allowed to go a three days' journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to our God."

"He will never let us go."

"He shall let us go! Remember I go not alone. My brother Aaron, who hath an eloquent tongue, goes with me. But I am thrice armed against the Pharaoh, for God goes with me. He it is who will teach me and sustain me. I trust in His promises. Gather together your herds. Gird up your garments,[2] for as God lives we shall all go[3] out from here free men."

THE PHARAOH ANSWERS

In the same high, vaulted council room of the Pharaoh's palace in which the command to kill all the Hebrew boy babies was given, another interesting scene is now taking place. King Meneptah II is Egypt's ruler at present. His counsellors stand before him. His loved son stands at his right hand. They have been holding court, hearing and settling all sorts of disputes, sending men to prison for little faults, or putting them to death; for this king is not only cruel but weak and vain and changeable.

A court attendant, bowing low, announces that two Hebrews are without and seek audience with the king.

"Admit them," was the curt command.

[2] **Gird up your garments.** That is, prepare for action as a worker who rolls up his sleeves or a runner who fastens his garments tightly about him.

[3] **All go.** The number of the Israelites at this time is not definitely known. The estimates vary from 600,000 to 2,000,000. The smaller number is more probable,

The great curtains that shut out the sunlight are parted for an instant and very slowly but proudly two old men approach the throne. When they are a few steps away the Pharaoh lifts his hand and they pause and make obeisance almost to the floor. They are of a despised and humble race, come to ask the greatest of all favors. The Pharaoh disdains to speak directly to them, but turning to an attendant says,

"Who are these men and why trouble they the king?"

The attendant, turning haughtily, as though he himself were a prince, demands,

"What is your business before the king? Speak quickly!"

Then Aaron, for he and Moses were the two who had come to speak to the Pharaoh,[1] steps bravely forward and says, "We are come as representatives of the Hebrews, a race humble, now in the service of Egypt's lord, but of noble lineage. You see us spokesmen of slaves now. But there was a time when we were rich and free. Our great father, Joseph, saved thy people and his people from death by famine and was nobly rewarded for his wisdom and skill. All that has been forgotten and to-day our people serve thee in countless fashions."

"All this," said the king coldly, "is old and profitless news. What is now thy mission? Art thou that Joseph, returned to counsel me?"

A dark flush rose to Aaron's cheek, but he held himself proudly and answered,

"I am come to ask thee, most noble lord, to allow

[1] **Representation before the king.** The Pharaoh could not refuse to listen to Moses and Aaron because they claimed the Egyptian right to represent a class. It was, and still is, a law of Egypt that each class of the community, each religion, each trade, each nationality, has its recognized representative, who stands between it and the government and acts on its behalf in all political and legal affairs. The fact that the Israelites were slaves did not invalidate their right to representation.

my people to go a three days' journey into the Wilderness to make sacrifices to our God."[2]

The Pharaoh laughed; and when the king laughs all lesser ones laugh too. Above their mocking laughter the king's voice rose clear and cold.

"Who is this God of the Wilderness? I know him not. Are not Egypt's gods enough for thee and thy wretched kinsmen? Or is it a ruse on thy part to escape work for three days? Ye are an idle and worthless lot. Surely my task-masters pamper thee or there would be no chance for thee to hatch such idle and wild schemes." Then, turning angrily to his counsellors, he said,

"At what tasks are these slaves set?"

"They are required, my lord, to make a measure of brick of mud and straw each day to build the walls that protect thy boundaries from our enemies."

"Deliver to them no more straw, yet require of them the same daily measure of brick. Let each man find his own straw; then will he be too busy to give ear to such disloyal schemes. They are lazy, idle dogs. Give the task-masters tidings. Let each slave who falls short in his required measure have a dozen whip lashes. 'A three days' journey into the Wilderness!' Am I not god to such as these?"

Without one word or look to Aaron or Moses, who were still on their knees, the haughty Pharaoh rose and walked out of the room.

Related Work. This story may well be dramatized.

A reproduction of the council hall may be made in miniature. The room may be constructed by using a cardboard box about eighteen

[2] **A three days' journey.** It may be asked why Moses had Aaron put his request in this form, since he certainly meant never to return. The Hebrews were originally a nomad people of the Wilderness. The gods of the Wilderness could presumably be worshipped only in their own Wilderness home. The Egyptians were themselves extremely religious and would agree that worship was a duty. It was therefore a form of plea that would appeal to the Pharaoh.

inches wide, twenty-four inches long, and twelve inches deep, the top and one end removed. Rugs and draperies will be needed for the floor and walls. Parts not covered by these may be colored with crayons or paints. The throne, canopy, scepter, and crown may be made of cardboard. Figures may be dressed to represent the king, counsellors, and other characters. These may be attached to their places by paste or liquid glue.

THE BEGINNING OF THE PLAGUES

UPON the broad bosom of the beautiful river Nile the royal barge was floating one morning in early spring. In the forward part of the boat, reclining under a golden awning among soft pillows the Pharaoh was taking his morning outing. The boat was manned by black slaves who dipped their oars lazily. Sometimes they sang as they rowed. It was early, and a delicious coolness pervaded the air, for it was spring and the long hot days of summer had not dried out the land.

The Pharaoh was accompanied by his queen and two members of his court, his fan-bearer and his court priest. They reclined among the soft pillows and skins without saying much. A slave touched the strings of a lute very softly in a thin, sweet air. If the Pharaoh was troubled by wars or enemies or dissatisfied slaves who wished to escape from his country, he did not show it.

Suddenly the boat veered toward the shore along which ran a broad highway where many people walked and rode. Among these people might be seen two old men with stooped shoulders and long, white beards. They were Moses and his brother, Aaron.

As the Pharaoh's boat drew near the shore they stood and gazed at it intently. Many people gathered about as a crowd of curious idlers gathers to-day. The Pharaoh's fan-bearer spoke softly. "My lord, the

Pharoah, there is that stirrer up of trouble, Moses, and his eloquent brother. Shall we push farther out in the stream?"

The Pharaoh did not even trouble to look towards the shore, but replied, "Nay. We run not from any man. What sayeth the trouble maker now? Hark! It is the same favor they ask. I have already refused them. Let the dogs beware! The Pharaoh is not always patient."

The two old men had paused and drawn themselves up proudly. Moses held in his hand the rod that had been turned into a serpent.[1] Now he stretched it forth toward the king and cried, "The Lord God of the Hebrews sends us unto thee. We demand of thee as Pharaoh that thou let our people go a three days' journey into the Wilderness to sacrifice to our God. Else with this rod I shall smite the waters of the Nile and they shall be turned to blood."

But the Pharaoh leaned back among his cushions and laughed. "He threatens bravely," he said. "But my magicians can do as well as he. Did they not match him wonder for wonder yesterday in the palace? On! On!" he cried to the rowers.

But Moses had thrust his rod into the water, and when he lifted it the drops fell from it as red as rubies in the morning sunshine. The rowers dipped their oars and the water foamed thick and ruddy behind them. From the waters came a strange, repugnant odor of dead things. Dead fish floated to the surface.

[1] **Magic.** "The Egyptians had an intense belief in magic. . . . To transform a serpent into a rod or a rod into a serpent was a comparatively easy feat which the jugglers of Cairo can still perform. Books had been compiled which reduced this magic to a science. It is presumable that Moses was trained in magic so that he could match the king's magicians trick for trick. Equally easy was it seemingly to turn the water of the river into blood or even to multiply the frogs on the wet land." Sayce, A. H., "The Early History of the Hebrews," p. 167. Rivington, London.

All the people stooped to the river's brink. Some dipped their hands into the water but quickly shook the red stain from their fingers.

"It is blood," they whispered.

"That the Pharaoh and all the people may know," cried Aaron, "that the God of the Hebrews liveth. He fights for us. We shall yet go out of Egypt in honor."

But the people shrank away from him.

"Turn back!" commanded the Pharaoh. "I will never let them go though the river run blood till we all perish." But a look of fear crept into his eyes and he fell silent as though in deep thought.

"He will surely let us go," the slaves whispered among themselves; and the king's counsellors said, "Let the troublesome creatures go. They will betray thee else to some more powerful enemies."

But the Pharaoh set his heart stubbornly against them.

PHARAOH GIVES HIS CONSENT

Now came dark days for Egypt. One after another came the plagues.[1] After the river was turned to blood,

[1] **The plagues.** "The ten plagues recounted by the writer of the Hebrew history are all plagues which still recur in Egypt. . . . Still, each year, the water of the Nile becomes like blood at the time of the inundation. Each year, too, the inundation brings with it myriads of frogs, while the lice and flies still irritate the visitor to Egypt almost beyond endurance. The plague of the thunder and hail is also not infrequent. The locusts, too, are now and again carried inland by the southeast winds from the shores of the Red Sea. The darkness that might be felt was but a heightened form of the darkness occasioned by the wind and sand storms of the spring. In the space of a single year (1895-1896) the Egypt of our own day has experienced most of the plagues of which we read in the book of Exodus. Blood-red water, frogs and lice, flies and boils, hailstorms and darkness, the scourge of cholera, have all visited the land. There was nothing consequently in the plagues themselves that was either supernatural or contra-natural." Adapted from Sayce, op. cit. (p. 161), pp. 168, 169.

came the frogs in great numbers. They died, and the smell as their bodies decayed under the hot sun made life almost unbearable for a time. Then came great swarms of lice, that crawled on the bodies and in the clothing of the people, filthy and irritating; then flies, in dense swarms, that crawled and stung too; and still the heart of the Pharaoh was hard as flint against Moses. He would listen, but he would make no promises. Month after month went by and his own people suffered more and more. And the poor slaves, how did they feel? Were they brave and patient, encouraging Moses and Aaron? I imagine their faith grew with the appearance of every new plague. But some, no doubt, complained very bitterly, saying, "Moses and Aaron are making it harder for us. We are worse off than we were before they came. Why don't they go away and leave us?" And the people about the king? They, too, were whispering among themselves and getting more and more frightened. No doubt they advised him to let the Hebrews go. But slaves meant wealth to the Pharaoh, and wealth meant power to build new monuments to his nation's pride. Besides, nothing that his magicians could not equal had yet been done.

But new plagues continued to appear. The Egyptians had not so much wondered at these plagues themselves. Egypt was, and is to-day, used to various plagues; but the thought that Moses could command their appearance frightened them. Moses now threatened, and there came a sickness upon the cattle of which they died in untold numbers. He threatened, and an epidemic of boils afflicted the people. Again he threatened, and a terrible hail destroyed the growing crops. Then lo-

The superstitious Egyptians, however, saw in them the hand of that God which the Hebrews wished to worship. And the skeptical Pharaoh himself at last became a convert to their belief. In fear lest a worse evil might befall him, he allowed the Israelites to depart out of Egypt.

custs came and ate up all that the hail had left. But still the king remained obstinate. So far, the plagues had not touched him personally. Living secure in his palace, attended by his slaves, his comfort was undisturbed. A time was to come, however, when even the king on his throne could not escape.

It was the last and most terrible plague of all. Moses expected it to succeed in paving the way for the escape of his people. He warned them to be all ready to start quickly in the night. He warned them to eat the feast of the passover with their robes girded about them. He knew that haste meant everything to them, for he was sure when the Pharaoh realized that they were gone with all their posssessions and meant never to come back, he would send his armies to drag them back. He knew, too, that as the Hebrews must travel heavily loaded they could go only as fast as the old and the lame, the little children and the little lambs and calves could walk. They must get away as far as possible before the armies of the Pharaoh started to pursue them.

For the last time Moses faced the king. Gone was all pretense of respect and reverence. The king was out of patience and sullen and obstinate. Moses was angry and used no smooth, soft words, but stood and talked like a man confident of his power to succeed. Looking straight into the eyes of the Pharaoh, he said,

"Thus sayeth the Lord. About midnight I will go out of Egypt; and all the first-born of Egypt shall die, from the first-born of the Pharaoh that sitteth upon the throne to the first-born of the maid-servant that sitteth behind the mill; and all the first-born of the beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more. But against any of the children of

Israel not a dog shall move his tongue, against man or beast; that ye may know the Lord puts a difference between the Egyptian and Israel. And all these thy servants shall come down unto me and bow down and say, 'Get thee out and all the people that follow after thee.' After that I will go out." Without another word or backward glance Moses went out of the king's house.

The Pharaoh laughed scornfully; still he did not believe.

But at midnight, when all Egypt lay sleeping, little fearing or dreaming of danger, there came a strong, icy wind, bitter cold and piercing like a sword. It touched every first-born creature in the land, and under its breath was death. In his soft, silken bed the crown prince lay cold and still. In every tiny hut, in every home in the city and country a boy or girl was gone forever. In every home lights sprang up; hurrying feet came rushing through the streets; frightened voices called frantically for help.

"Help! Help!" they called. "Death is upon us!"

In every home mothers wept and sobbed.

The Pharaoh rose swiftly and after looking for a long time upon the face of his own dead child, called for Moses. And when Moses came he said, "Rise up and get ye forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the Lord as ye have said. Take also your flocks and your herds and be gone. And," he added, "bless me also."

Moses had conquered, but at what a cost! And the people went out so hastily that they took their unrisen bread in the kneading troughs. And all Egypt was glad to see them go.

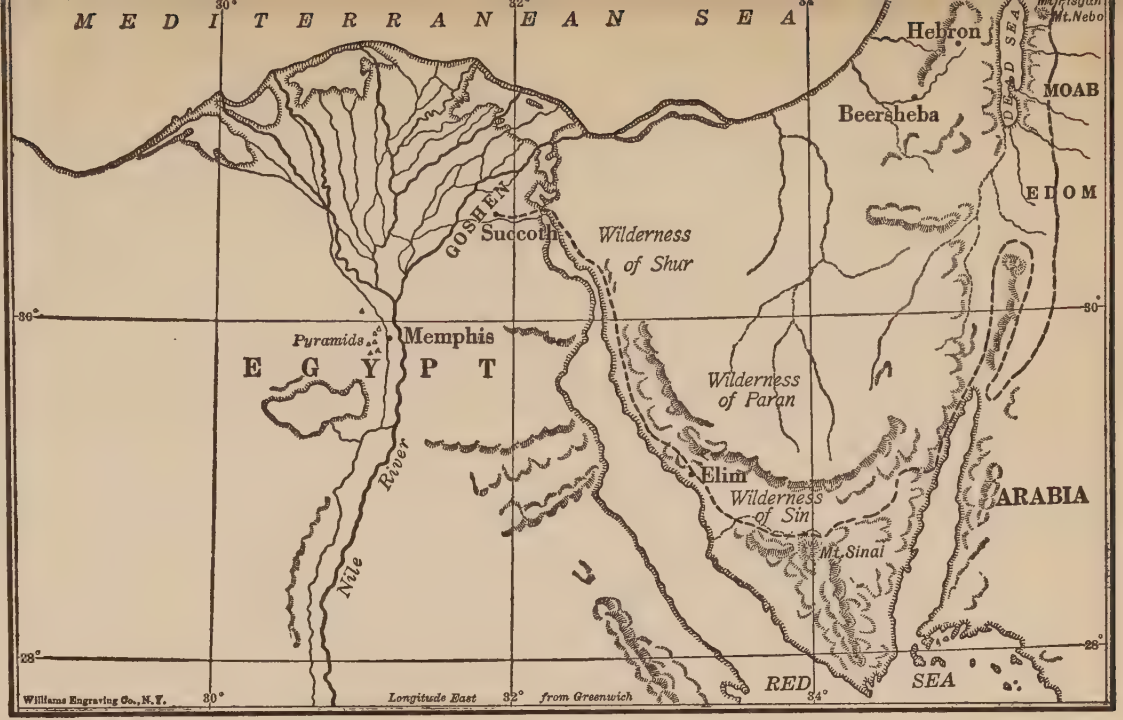
THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER

WHILE it was true that every Egyptian house was filled with death and bitter mourning, the homes of the Israelites were full of rejoicing and frantic haste. Yet they were obedient to Moses, and even in that dreadful time remembered to do as he had commanded.

"If the Pharaoh persists in refusing to let us go," said Moses, "God shall send an angel of death and every first-born creature in the land shall perish."

"And what shall hinder that our little ones be stricken with the rest?" they cried.

"We will make a sign," said Moses, "so plain that the angel may not mistake. Take now a lamb from among your flocks. It must be a male lamb without blemish. Let the priests slay the lamb and preserve the blood in a vessel. Then, with a sprig of hyssop, dipped in the blood, strike above and on either side of the door where dwells a faithful believer in Jehovah. This blood stain shall be a sign to the angel of death that none in that house shall be slain. He shall become for us the angel of the Passover. Besides this, you must roast the lamb whole and eat it with bitter herbs. You must eat it with every preparation made for escape; for when we go out of Egypt we must go hurriedly while they mourn for their dead. This shall always be called the feast of the Passover. You must eat it with your loins girded and shoes on your feet and a staff in your hands as a sign of your faith in God that He will show you a way out of bondage. You shall eat only unleavened bread for seven days. You must not eat this feast sitting at ease and enjoying yourselves, but you must eat it standing, that at the first word you may be ready to start. Not one morsel or scrap must be left and if, by chance, any small piece is



Egypt and the Land of the Wanderings of the Israelites

The dotted line shows the general route of the wanderings of Moses and the Israelites after the Exodus from Egypt, starting from near Succoth, and continuing for forty years until the death of Moses near Mt. Nebo.

left over, you must burn it before morning. This shall be a sacred and solemn ceremony to you and your children forever."

Can you not imagine how excited the people must have been? They who had faith in Moses—and I presume they must have all believed in him by this time—had been anxiously waiting for the hour of their release from bondage. They had long ago packed up their possessions. They had told the little children over and over of the long journey before them. They had dreamed of and hoped and prayed for the Promised Land, and now they were actually getting ready to start. Four hundred and thirty years their people had lived in Egypt and most of that time none of them had been free or happy. They themselves and their children had all been born slaves. They had known nothing but hard work and cruel beatings, the poorest food and the disgrace and humiliation of slavery. Because they belonged to a people naturally proud who had been free they suffered more on that account. Now they were again to be free. Can you not imagine their happiness? Think how carefully they would obey Moses. Supposing some doorway should be missed and one of their own children slain!

Under cover of the darkness, while Egypt mourned and wept over her dead, they would be running away, with all their loved ones, to a lovely land of sunshine and flowers, a land that should be their own, a land given to them by God.

Through all the years that have passed since, the faithful Hebrew people have kept the feast of the Passover. Even to-day a small sect of the Samaritans in Palestine keep the feast with all its details as carefully as at first.

ACROSS THE SEA

THE Israelites have eaten the Passover. It means that God has covenanted, or made a solemn agreement with them. Now they are waiting, waiting eagerly and anxiously. Suddenly there is heard a great shouting and tumult among the Egyptians, a weeping and a mourning, a running up and down in terror. A child lies dead in every Egyptian home. In the midst of this confusion, Moses gives the word of command and the great march begins, the march that must end in freedom.

They made a long procession. At the head were soldiers, strong young men who knew the way. They carried arms, bows and arrows, slings, knives and staves. Then came a group of priests, each leading a mule, which carried on its back some of the equipment used in their worship—the curtains and ornaments, the priest's vestments, and precious parchments or sacred writings. Then came the greatest treasure, without which they never would have undertaken even the journey to freedom, the embalmed body of Joseph, their great ancestor, which has rested all these years in one of Egypt's rocky tombs. He had persuaded them to enter Egypt, and he must go out with them. Then came Moses, walking bravely and proudly, happy to be at last on the way in spite of danger and privation; not confident yet, perhaps, for they were still within the land of Egypt, but hoping, trusting, praying for strength and wisdom and guidance through the danger and darkness of the way. Then came the people, each with his own possessions, his sheep and cattle, his tent and household furnishings. They took all they had, and carried away with them many of the belongings of the Egyptians, gold and precious stones and fine clothing. They were heavy laden and had to walk slowly.

They turned first to the south,[1] not because that was the easiest or shortest way, but because the northern way was guarded by the Philistines and they wished to avoid battle. The direct eastern way was patrolled by bands of Egyptian soldiers, who would at least harass them. The southern way led into a wilderness and was blocked by a shallow sea, but Moses chose it in preference to the others. He distrusted and feared men, but his faith in God was strong and he believed that He would make a way out for them. He had need of such great faith with all these helpless people following and trusting him. He put little trust in the promises of the Pharaoh. He had every reason to believe that as soon as the Egyptians could care for their dead children they would follow and seek to turn him back. At best he knew there was need of frantic haste. So he did not let them stop much for rest or food.

The clouds hung low over the shallow sea, when at last they staggered out onto its sandy shores. A heavy wind from the east lashed it into a fury. It drove the shallow waters back and back until a pathway seemed to open out before them. They had to stop to rest a while. The babies cried for food. The old and the sick must be cared for. They were all hungry and tired and frightened, so that they complained bitterly and said, "Has he

[1] **Route followed.** Moses led the people first from the neighborhood of the city of Rameses to Succoth. From Succoth they marched to Etham, in the edge of the Wilderness. But here they were still in a province of Egypt. Etham was one of the fortresses which guarded a caravan route out of Egypt. After leaving Etham they came to Migdel and the sea. There they pitched their tents. What sea they crossed is not definitely known. The records are at variance. But so much we feel safe in saying: they crossed some shallow arm of the Red Sea. They were aided in so doing by a strong east wind which drove the waters back. The pathway so uncovered was too soft to sustain the weight of the horses and chariots of the Egyptians and so their pursuit ended in disaster.

Raphael

The Israelites Passing Through the Red Sea

Raphael

Israelites Worshipping the Golden Calf

By Courtesy of Perry Pictures Co., Malden, Mass.

brought us out here to die? We might better be slaves in Egypt."

Meantime, Moses spoke no word but, leaning on his staff, looked long and earnestly out over the angry, wind-driven sea. Then they all heard a sound that frightened them and made them willing to obey him. Clear and high above the sound of the wind and waves rang the trumpets of Pharaoh's soldiers coming to turn them back. Return meant certain punishment—death for many of them, the dungeon, the galleys, the stone quarries, for others. It meant the cruellest kind of punishment for the young and beautiful girls. It meant poverty and hunger and shame and cruel beatings for them all. Would they give up now and go back?

"No!" cried Moses. "Better be swallowed up by these dark waves! God has brought us so far. Shall we not go on trusting Him? Follow me!"

With his rod held out before him, his long, white robe blown back by the wind, with uplifted eyes, as though he saw God whom he trusted, he walked forward, straight into the sea, and the waters retreated before him. After him came his people, terrified and awed into frantic haste and silence. Step by step they advanced, while ever and always behind them they heard the trample and shouts of the horses and the soldiers of Egypt. At last their feet pressed upon the warm, dry land, and they knew that the sea was passed.

The fierce, high wind died away. The dark waters rolled back and back. The morning sun shone over them and not one trace of their pathway could be seen. But from far beyond them floated the banners of the Pharaoh's armies. For the last time came the clear bugle call. His horses and chariots, his soldiers and officers could no longer be seen. The waters had closed over them.

Then Miriam took a timbrel, or tambourine, in her hand and called to the young women, and they danced and sang:

"Sing to the Lord,
For He has triumphed gloriously.
The horse and his rider He hath thrown into the sea."

Related Work. Make a map or sand-table model showing the route of the Hebrews in leaving Egypt. Study well a map of this and the surrounding regions.

IN THE WILDERNESS

THIS is a letter from Mishya, a Hebrew boy ten years old. Mishya was one of the Israelites who lived in the desert for a generation.[1]

Dear Boys and Girls:

My name is Mishya. I am as big and far stronger than any of you who read this letter. My hair is black and curly. My eyes are dark brown. My skin is brown, too, but clear, and my cheeks are red. I wear a coat of wool from our own sheep. My mother wove the cloth and sewed the coat together. I have another cloak made of goat skins that I roll up in at night, for it is very cold here after the sun goes down. Sometimes I wear sandals made of skins, but usually I go barefooted. I am a little afraid to go barefooted because there are scorpions in the sand and if one bites you I tell you it hurts! I have a chum named Dan. He and I hunt together and share all our food. He is not as strong as I am. I can throw him in a fair fight.

You may be interested to know how we got along after we were safe from pursuit by those dreadful old Egyp-

[1] Several letters follow this one.

tians. When we looked back and saw the water being driven back by the wind, we watched them sink down and down until just the tips of their horses' ears showed, then just the tips of the banners, then nothing at all but just the dark waves of water. I tell you we felt pretty serious, but happy, too, to think that we were safe at last. We sang and danced and shouted. Everybody just seemed to go wild for joy. Miriam and the women danced and sang. Moses and the priest sacrificed a lamb for a burnt-offering to show Jehovah how thankful we all were. Most of us just knelt down in the sand and said a little prayer of gratitude because we did not have to be slaves to the Pharaoh any more.

Then we began to realize how tired we were, only we couldn't rest right away because there was so much work to be done. First, we had to put up our tents. Dan and I helped drive the stakes and stretch the ropes. Then we helped unload the camels and donkeys and spread out the rugs and hang up the curtains. The babies were crying for milk and somebody had to milk the goats. But there were so many of us that we soon had breakfast ready. We had bread and meat that our mothers had cooked before we left home back in Egypt. Dan and I found some turtle eggs down in the sand by the sea and I'll tell you they tasted good!

Then we slept a long time. My mother came in and shook me and cried out, "Wake up, lazy Mishya. We must travel on!"

But there was a stone-bruise on my big toe and it ached and I didn't want to get up. But they took the tent down from over me and left me lying in the hot sunshine and I got up and ran after them.

Then we marched all day. The shepherds and dogs followed with the flocks. Oh my, but the way was rough! You see, we were afraid to follow the road, for it was guarded by Egyptian soldiers who might turn us

back.[2] So we just scrambled over the rocks and one big hill after another. Here is a picture you can look at and then you can begin to understand how bitter hard it was.

The sun beat down upon my back and I wanted a drink. I asked my mother for a drink, but she said there was only a little water for me, and to wait for evening. So I waited.

My father was one of the scouts who went on ahead to find the way and to see if any wild beasts or men were near. He was a swift runner. Moses trusted him. We were very proud to have our great, kind, brave leader trust him. I mean to be a swift runner when I grow up. Once my father saw a lion. He stood in the rocks and my father threw a spear at him and he ran away. And once he saw black men on swift horses, but they ran away, too. Perhaps they were afraid of him. He is very brave.

That night I was hungry and thirsty too. There was just one little sip of water apiece and a little cheese and curds. I ate mine quickly and rolled up in my goat-skin and went to sleep, but I dreamed of the fresh cucumbers and onions that we used to have in Egypt and I woke up hungrier than ever.

All next day we travelled through more and more sand, over one great hill after another, never seeming to get anywhere but just going on and on long after everybody was too tired to do anything but just plod along. I had blisters on my feet and my tongue was swollen until it felt too big for my mouth. I would have cried if no one could have seen me, but I knew better than to whine and complain. I had to just smile and stand it all and keep

[2] **Continuation of route.** After the Israelites had crossed the sea they had yet to choose carefully what route they would follow. There was a well known road, but they dared not follow it because of fear of the Egyptian soldiers who guarded the convicts working the mines. So they abandoned the road and plunged into the desert called Shur. Here they wandered for three days without water.

Raphael

Moses Striking the Rock (see page 178)

Moses Presenting the Law to the People

By Courtesy of Perry Pictures Co., Malden, Mass.

on smiling. That night I heard my mother say, "Why did Moses bring us out here to die? Wouldn't it be better to be a live slave in Egypt than a dead Hebrew in this desert?" And my father said, "We will find water. Be patient and brave. Jehovah will not desert us." But when the baby cried, my mother could not comfort him.

The next day it was even worse. We just crept along, knowing that to give up meant death, and not seeing any hope of anything else. Then Moses came riding back along the lines and spoke cheerfully to us. He said he believed we would find water. Some of the people cheered him. We all loved and trusted him.

It was my father who found water. He came running back along the lines crying, "Courage! Courage! Only a little farther! I have seen it! Beautiful blue water is lying among the hills. Only a little farther now!"

I ran! I forgot how tired I was and ran. I came to the green trees and green grass. I dropped down to drink. Then I spit the water out of my mouth. That beautiful water was as bitter as gall, so bitter that though we were famished for water we could not drink a drop. Then everybody began to weep and curse. They said, "We will choose another leader and go back to Egypt. But we shall all die on the way!"

But Moses was not discouraged. He said, "Pluck some of the branches off this tree and throw them into the water. Some of the men obeyed him and soon the water was sweet and good and we drank all we wanted.

Oh, but we were happy! We filled all the water-skins. We watered the sheep and cattle. We bathed, and bound up our poor blistered feet, and then we started on. We knew now where we were going. Moses told us of a wonderful mountain where he had talked with God. God had spoken to him from a bright bush, which seemed to be burning but had not burnt up. God had told him to go back to Egypt and get us away from

the wicked Pharaoh. The mountain was called Mount Sinai and was covered all the time with fire and bright clouds. In these bright clouds God lived. We were all very anxious to see the mountain.

We were getting pretty short of food. But some old men who had lived in the desert before showed us how to eat the hardened juices of the tamarisk tree and the lichens on the rocks. We gathered them and our mothers made of them a kind of bread called manna. We nearly always had curds and sometimes we had quail. We did not starve but sometimes we were pretty hungry.

Always and always we looked forward to the Promised Land. Oh, but it would be fine to be there! But until then we will have to stand by each other and be loyal and brave and not complain when out here on the desert we are all so dependent on each other.

This is all I can tell you this time, because I have to take care of the baby while my mother makes the manna bread. But I will write you again some time if you like this letter.

Your far-away friend,

MISHYA.

Related Work. Cloth may be woven, sandals made, tents and camps constructed, and desert or wilderness, scenes made on the sand table or drawn and colored on paper. Any of the activities engaged in by the Hebrews indicated in the story may supply motives for construction.

Locate on a map the Desert or Wilderness of Shur.

WE FIGHT WITH THE WILD MEN

Greetings to my Little Friends:

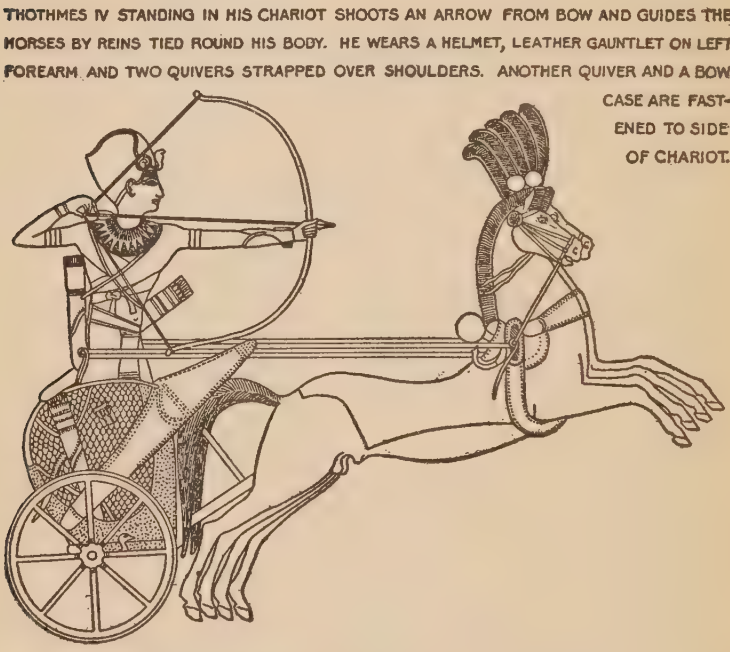
The worst part of all that long journey I told you about in my first letter were the terrible hours and days

of thirst. You run and get a drink of fresh, cool water every time you feel thirsty, and perhaps throw half of it away, but we never had enough to drink. And it was fearfully hot all the day long and so cold at night. Although Dan and I burrowed in the warm sand at night and pulled our goat-skin coats over us, even then we were often cold. Because we were all so tired and cold and thirsty, people began to find fault with Moses. They quarrelled and fought among themselves, and at last one man, who was very bold, cried out, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt to this forlorn place? See those children lying there almost dead! Give us water!" Then a lot of them called out together loudly, "Yes, give us water!" And a few of them picked up stones and threw them at Moses

Then Moses knelt down and lifted up his hands and prayed out loud so that we all could hear what he said. "Oh Jehovah, what shall I do? These people are ready to stone me." Then he was quiet for a little while and all the people were quiet, too, listening to hear if God would answer; but we heard nothing. But very soon Moses stood up and faced the people and his face shone bright and beautiful; and we felt sure that God had told him what to do. So we waited as patiently as we could to see what he would do.

Then Moses said, "Let the Elders come with me." And the old men gathered around him. Then he said, "Fetch me the rod which I stretched out over the sea." And they brought it. Then Moses and the Elders walked forward to a great, rocky wall and there they stopped. You may be sure we were all watching everything they did, though some of us were so weak that we could not stand up. The baby just lay in my mother's arms and moaned and cried. It made a curious little sick feeling in my heart just to listen to him. Just a little drink of water would save his life.

Then Moses threw back his long robe, lifted the arm that held the rod that had parted the sea's waters and struck the face of the rock a sharp, hard blow. The little stones and gravel flew about in a shower so that those near by had to shut their eyes for a moment: and


THOTHMES IV STANDING IN HIS CHARIOT SHOOTS AN ARROW FROM BOW AND GUIDES THE HORSES BY REINS TIED ROUND HIS BODY. HE WEARS A HELMET, LEATHER GAUNTLET ON LEFT FOREARM AND TWO QUIVERS STRAPPED OVER SHOULDERS. ANOTHER QUIVER AND A BOW CASE ARE FASTENED TO SIDE OF CHARIOT.

A Two-Horsed Egyptian Chariot—About 1425 B.C.
Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art

when we looked again there was a clear, lovely stream of water flowing down the hill. It had already made a little pool. For one little moment we all stared, too surprised to move; then we struggled to our feet and ran forward. I carried some of the clear water to the baby and gave him a little at a time until he sat up and smiled

at us. Then my mother wept and the tears rolled down her cheeks.

"Don't cry now, mother," I said, "God has saved us."

"I weep for joy, my son," she answered, "for joy that God has not deserted us."

But all our troubles were not about water and food. We had scarcely all had a real good drink when we heard in the distance a great shouting. Men were soon running wildly here and there. The cattle were all bellowing with terror.

"What is it now? Oh, what is it now?" we all cried.

Then my father came, who had been far on ahead, crying out as he came, "The wild men are upon us! The wild men, come to kill us! To arms! To arms!"

We could see them in the distance, men on horses riding furiously in our direction as though they meant to ride right over us. But we had soldiers too. Brave Joshua was our commander. He wasn't afraid of anything. He went riding by like the wind on the beautiful bay horse he had brought out of Egypt, shouting, "To arms! To arms!" He waved his hands and shouted and all our fighting men sprang forward. They were big, young, strong men and they loved to fight. They snatched their bows and arrows, their knives and swords. Whatever they could get they fought with, though some of them could only pick up great rocks and hurl them at the enemy.

We were afraid our wonderful Moses would be hurt, so Aaron and Hur helped him to the top of the hill where all the people could see him, and he sat there and held up that mighty rod which had struck the rock and brought forth water. But he was too old and tired to hold it up alone all the time, so the two men held up his arms for him. As long as our soldiers could have a sight of

him there they fought bravely, so bravely that at last the wild men (they were called Amalekites) were driven away. They carried their dead with them, but we had to crawl out and bury our dead in the night time. My mother worked with the other women, taking care of the wounded and preparing food for the soldiers. We all worked hard; we had to do so. It was our lives or theirs. We must always work as hard as we can for our own people. My mother told me that.

So I carried water all night long. I fed the cattle. I kept the torches burning. I tended the fires.

When the morning came at last, we were ready to travel. But Moses told us to build an altar, so we brought stones and piled them together. But Moses swore that between us and the Amalekites there should be always war, until one or the other of us should be exterminated.[1]

I must close now. I have to care for our little pet lamb that gets too tired to walk.

Your little Hebrew friend,

MISHYA.

P.S. I forgot to tell you just how we all kept together through the wilderness. Our caravan was so long that those near the end were afraid they would get lost. So Moses had one man walk ahead and carry high above his head, so that the farthest stragglers could plainly see, a brazier of burning charcoal. The smoke from this burning formed a cloud by day and a fire by night. As long as we could see that pillar of cloud or fire, we were not afraid of going astray.

MISHYA.

[1] **Feud.** The blood feud of clans is the old law of a life for a life, which still prevails in some sections of that country. If some one kills my brother I or some member of my family must kill him or some member of his family to even up the score.

THE STORY OF ACHI

Dear Boys and Girls:

There have been so many other interesting things to tell you that I have not had a chance to tell you about Achi.[1] But I must tell you, for something very dreadful has happened to him.

Achi was our donkey, Dan's and mine. We had taken care of him ever since we left our homes in Egypt. He was a little fellow, not much bigger than a big dog. He was gray like a mouse and shaggy, with bright eyes that looked out at you through a tangle of hair with such a funny twinkle that you almost felt that he was laughing at you. But he could carry loads even if he was so little. Every morning we strapped on him all our cooking things, the kneading troughs, the water-skins, and every thing we had to eat, and he carried them through the hot sand and over the steep hills and never once complained. I tell you, Achi had a drink if any one did; but sometimes even he could not drink because there was no water. Then we all lay down and slept, or plodded on as patiently as we could. Were we not going to reach the Promised Land soon? That thought made us brave and patient.

Since I have told you how we loved Achi you will understand how dreadful it was for us to wake up one morning and find that he was gone. Father said he had strayed away and if we would look through all the camps we would find him. But there were so many little gray donkeys and they all looked alike; so how were we to look at them all?

Dan said, "Let's go through the camp and whistle Achi's whistle. If he hears us he will answer." That

[1] **Achi**, pronounced A′-kē.

was one of his cunning tricks. If we whistled, "Whee-e-e-hee," he would answer, "Hee-e-e-hee."

We were staying a few days at Elim,[2] a place where there were twelve fine springs of water and some great palm trees. We were all tired and wanted just to rest, but there was much to do. Our mothers washed and mended our clothes and the old men made sandals for us and re-strung the bows and made new arrow tips. The young men hunted for fresh game and kept a close look-out for wild men. We boys and girls carried water and wood and helped feed the sheep and goats and did a hundred little things that had to be done.

We were near the place where Moses had once lived with his father-in-law, Jethro, a Midianite priest; where he married Zipporah, and where he had seen the burning bush and heard God tell him to go back to Egypt and take us all away from the wicked Pharaoh. Jethro came to visit us and see Moses and Zipporah and his little grandchildren. We would have had more time to look for Achi if we hadn't had to do so much extra work about the camp so that everything would be nice and clean for company.

But we did hunt for him some, and it didn't take long to find him. I whistled and Dan whistled and then we listened and heard, very faintly and weakly, a little "Hee-ee-hee," that we knew for sure was Achi. We ran and looked, and very soon we found him behind a big rock. He was tied so closely that he could not raise his head. He had been beaten so that great welts stood out on his sides, and he was so hungry and thirsty he was nearly dead. I started to untie him, but Dan lay right down beside him and put his arms around his neck and began to cry. Before I could get him loose a great big man

[2] **Elim or Elath.** An oasis with twelve springs and a grove of palm trees. It had taken them a full month to reach Elim, a distance of about two hundred miles.

rose up from behind a rock and said, "What are you doing to my donkey?"

"He isn't your donkey! He's ours," I answered.

The man put his hand to his girdle and drew out a great ugly knife and said, "This knife says the donkey is mine. Now you get out!" There wasn't anything to do but to run; but we didn't run far, just out of his reach. Then we hid behind a rock and planned what to do.

"You go," I said to Dan, "and tell my father to come here. Tell him to bring some men with him."

Dan went away so quickly I could hardly see him go. I lay and watched poor little Achi. He called and called, "Hee-ee-e-hee." By and by the big man gave him a kick in the ribs. I thought he was dead, he lay so still. I guess I cried some. I guess you would have cried, too.

It wasn't very long before Dan came back, and with him were my father and my two big brothers and Dan's father. We showed them where the thief lay hidden and they spread out and crept up on him from every side very softly. Then they all sprang up and shouted and the man jumped to his feet and drew his big knife. But he was too late. The men all leaped on him and threw him and bound him hand and foot so that he was helpless. We didn't care much about him. Dan stayed by Achi while I ran for water and food, and very soon he was able to walk to the shade and the fresh grass and pretty soon he was all right. Oh, how happy we were!

The men dragged the thief through the camps to the Tent of Meeting, where Moses sat with Jethro. They were holding court. All day long wicked people were brought before Moses so that they might be judged and legally punished. There was a great crowd of men who were robbers, or drunkards, or sneak-thieves—trouble-makers of all kinds. Moses listened patiently to them all and gave just judgment; but he was tired, so tired

he could hardly sit up. It seemed as if this procession of wicked people would never end.

When it came our turn, my father stepped forward with the man who had stolen Achi. Moses looked at him steadily with the big, dark eyes that seemed to be seeing far, far into the deep places and said,

"Who are you?"

"I am Shem, son of Shem," said the thief, but he dared not look up.

"What have you done that you are brought here before me?"

"I found a miserable little donkey astray and took it in and cared for it."

Then Moses turned to my father. "Surely this is no offence. The law demands pity and care for the helpless."

Then my father was angry. He stepped forward. "He did not find the animal, my lord! He crept into our camp and stole it away. He beat and abused the poor creature. We found it starving. He threatened us with his knife. I denounce him as a thief. Shall he be stoned, my lord?"

"Are there others who know this thing to be true?"

"I, and I, my lord. We saw him," the men cried out.

"It is enough. Take him away and stone him," said Moses. Then he bent forward and covered his face with his hands and we could see the tears come through his fingers.

"Oh, I am weary of this!" he cried. "My people! My people! Why must you sin? Why must you suffer?"

Then Jethro, who sat near Moses, laid his arm across Moses' shoulder and said very gently, "You are overburdened. It is not right that you should have all this care. Divide the people into tribes and set judges over thousands and over hundreds and over tens. Let these

judges hear all the lesser cases and do you save your strength and wisdom for really large and important things." [3]

When Moses lifted his head we could see that he looked much happier. "It is good counsel," he said. "It shall be done."

Some time, if you wish me to, I will tell you how Moses wrote a number of laws [4] for the judges to enforce, that have played an important part ever since in governing the whole world.

Your loving friend,

MISHYA.

THE GIVING OF THE LAW

Dear Boys and Girls:

We did not stay long in the place of springs and palm trees, for always and always Moses was telling us exciting tales of a great sacred mountain where God dwelt and urging us on and on.[1] He seemed so sure that there we would receive some great good, that by and by we all grew very anxious to reach the spot. We could see it off in the distance long before we were anywhere near it. It rose like a great pillar of fire before us. Smoke hung always over it. In that smoke we believed God lived. We were anxious to get to the place.

At last we drew near and encamped in a pleasant valley with a little stream of water which flowed down from

[3] **Division into groups under judges.** This marked the first step in political organization of the Israelites. The period of the judges was to continue for many years. Moses was the first of the judges.

[4] **The book of laws.** The Book of Deuteronomy.

[1] **Mount Sinai.**. The term is derived from Sin, the moon god of Babylon, who had a temple in Ur. Between Elim and Mount Sinai lay the Wilderness of Sin.

the mountain side. The shepherds went farther with the flocks in search of pasture and all of us found work to do. We all felt excited, for we were nearing the Promised Land. How wonderful it would be to get there before the cold rains came on, and build our homes and rest ourselves after the long march!

Moses now went away and left us.[2] We did not know just where he had gone. Some said he would come back soon, others said he had deserted us. My father said he would be back soon, for he believed in him and loved him with all his heart. But after a while some of the people began to complain. Just a few at first, then more and more, said aloud, "This Moses, now! Where has he gone? Has he brought us here to the borders of the Promised Land only to forsake us, or will he come and lead us the rest of the way? Some said they wished they were back in Egypt. Others were much discouraged and frightened.

One day several men went to Aaron, who acted in a few things for Moses, and asked him when Moses was coming back. Aaron did not know, and told them so. That made them more unhappy than ever. They went away, but the next day they came to Aaron again and said, "This Moses, now, suppose he never does come back! What will we do?"

"Oh, he will come back," Aaron said.

"We are not so sure of that. Some wild beast may have devoured him. We have no God to defend us. This God of mystery, whom we cannot see, how is He to help us without Moses? We know so little about Him anyway, only what Moses has told us. Why can't we choose a god for ourselves of whom we can have an

[2] **Moses went away.** Moses sought solitude near the crest of the mountain in order that he might formulate laws for Israel. The period he spent, forty days, was an indefinite term. It was often used much as we say "for a long time."

image that we can see? We had many gods in Egypt; why not have at least one of them here?"

At first Aaron would not listen. He told them over and over that Moses was a true and faithful man and that he would not desert them. But they grew more and more fretful and hard to manage, and at last Aaron said, "Well, if you must have a god like one of the gods of Egypt, why not make an image of him and set it up here and worship it?"

That, it seems, was just what the people wanted. So the women gave their rings, bracelets and gold ornaments, and a skillful metal worker took them and melted them. Then he overlaid the figure of a calf with the gold so that it seemed to be all made of gold. Then all the people rejoiced and worshipped before it as they used to do before idols until Moses had told them concerning the true God.[3]

Then one day Moses came back! The people saw him coming afar off and were frightened, for they knew they had done wrong. They stopped dancing and singing and crouched down in frightened silence.

Moses, when he saw the image of the calf and realized what we were doing, was almost too surprised to speak. You see, he had worked so hard for us all, and had loved us so and tried so hard to teach us about the one true God, that he just could hardly believe that in so short a time the people would go back to worshipping before an idol like a golden calf. But he was not silent for long. He came striding into the camp and asked in a terrible voice, that made everybody cower, "What is the meaning of all this?"

Nobody dared answer but Aaron, and he was not very brave. But by and by he said, "My brother, be not

[3] The Egyptians worshipped before images of animals, among them Hather, the sacred cow. This explains the above choice of a calf as an object of worship.

angry. You were gone so long, and we were all alone near this fearful mountain. We were afraid. And so we chose us a god and made an image of him that we could see. We needed to have some god near to take care of us."

And then wasn't Moses angry! He was carrying two stone tablets on which, as we learned later, God had written ten laws for us, and he hurled them to the ground so hard that they broke into many little pieces. Then he turned on us and said in an awful voice, "And you desert the unseen God who drove the waters of the sea before you that you might escape slavery for the sight of a thing like this! You are slaves in spirit as well as in body. You are not worthy the sacrifice and anguish I have suffered for you. Oh, God shall in truth desert you!"

It seemed as though his heart was broken. Some of us began to weep. But Moses went on, "But you shall not bow down before this miserable thing. I shall destroy it." Then he seized the golden calf and hurled it to the ground and stamped on it. He ground it into pieces. Then he dissolved the pieces in water and made some of the men drink the water. Oh, he was furious and he had a right to be, too!

But presently, a change came over Moses and he stood there looking so sad and lonely, that Aaron crept up to him and said, "Forgive us, brother dear. We have sinned terribly. I did not realize just how terrible a thing it was that we were doing."

Then others came and stood before Moses and said, "We are sorry and ashamed. If you will forgive us and be good to us again, we will stand by you always."

It was hard for Moses to believe them. You see, he had trusted us so much, and worked and sacrificed for us; and then for us to do such a dreadful thing the first time we were out of his sight was almost more than he could bear. But he loved us in spite of it, and so, after

a little, he spoke to Aaron and his voice sounded softer.

"Even you, my brother! Did you have no better understanding of the unseen God? Oh, Aaron, you who have suffered with me!"

Then they both wept, and Moses put his arms around Aaron, and we knew we were forgiven.

Then Levi spoke very earnestly to Moses and said, "Dear master, if you have in truth forgiven us and still love us, please let us have the laws that the unseen God gave you for us."

Now Moses looked steadily at Levi and said, "I have destroyed the sacred tablets. I am ashamed," He hung his head and we all felt very sorry. He went on, "I was angry and humiliated. I am ashamed."

But Aaron cried out loudly, "You have no reason to be ashamed. We deserved it all and more. It is we who should weep for shame. Nevertheless, we pray you, give us the law."

"I have destroyed the tablets, yet are the laws written upon my heart. I will repeat them to you, and as I say each law, do you, to prove your sincerity, repeat it after me."

"We will repeat them and obey them," many people shouted.

Then Moses looked happier and said, "These are the laws:

I. Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.
II. Thou shalt not make any graven image of anything.
III. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
IV. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.
V. Honor thy father and mother.
VI. Thou shalt not kill.
VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII. Thou shalt not steal.
IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness.
X. Thou shalt not covet."

Then all the people cried out loudly, "We will obey." Moses seemed very happy, and I am sure we were all relieved and happy to have him with us again.

Your friend,

MISHYA.

Related Work. Mt. Sinai may be modeled on the sand-table, and this mountain should be located on a map to show its position relative to its surroundings.

The Tablets of the Law may be made on drawing paper by lettering and decorating.

THE FOODS AND INDUSTRIES OF THE HEBREWS

Dear Little Friends:

How I wish you could come to see us while we are encamped here near the Holy Mount. We have undertaken to build a wonderful Tabernacle in which to worship Jehovah fittingly. Moses received instructions from God as to just how to build it and we are all very busy at work upon it and happy. The place itself is beautiful with trees and green grass and a stream of water which seems to flow directly from the heart of a great cliff. It seems more beautiful to us than it would to you, because we remember so well all that we were deprived of during our long, long journey through the desert after our escape from Egypt. If you could come to see us, Dan and I would make a feast for you and show you all the interesting things going on. There is nothing we like so much as company. But since I know you can't come because you are too far away, I'll tell you what we

would do were you here. That will be the next best thing to having you come.

Of course, we could have given you much nicer things to eat, if you had come to see us while we were still in Egypt. There we had many delicious foods—fish, sweet melons, cucumbers and garlic, almonds and honey and dates, and all sorts of good things—but here we have only what we can get from our flocks and the scanty foods of the desert. Some of the people complain very bitterly because they miss many of the good things we had in Egypt, but Dan and I think it is better to be free even though you can't have all the things you like to eat. Just wait until we reach the Promised Land! There we shall have both delicious food, and freedom!

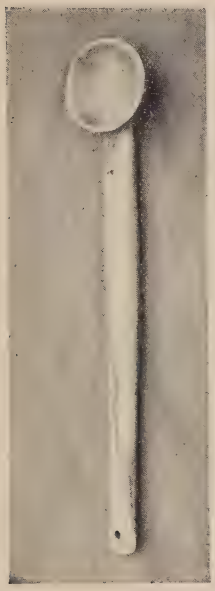
Let's just pretend that you can come. This is what we would do. Dan and I would ask our mothers to help us. We would meet you far out on the desert and guide you to our tent. There we would ask you to be seated on some soft cushions while we removed your sandals and bathed your feet. Then, when you were rested, we would have the women set before you a bowl of stewed kid's meat, a bowl of laban or curds, a glass of milk or water, and perhaps a little cheese. We could not offer you real bread, but we have something which is like bread. It is made of the hardened juices of the tamarisk tree and lichens or mosses which grow on rocks. These are ground together and baked. This is sometimes called manna, which means bread. It tastes very good if you are very hungry. Sometimes we could offer you broiled quail or wild game which our hunters find among the hills. That is very good. You see you would not have a feast, neither would you starve. We are sometimes very hungry, but we have faith in the unseen God, that He will not let us die but care for us and guide us to better things beyond. After you had eaten and rested we would show you around the camp.

Perhaps you have been thinking of us as tramps or roving tribes who had no interests or occupations beyond getting enough to eat. If so, you are much mistaken. I can prove it to you. I will show you first the carpenters at work. It is true we live in goat-skin tents, but we do have carpenters who are skillful at their trade. When Moses entrusted the building of the Tabernacle to Bezaleel, he found men who could cut boards from the wood of the acacia trees, plane them and shape them ready to be overlaid with gold. These men also cut and fitted the parts of the sacred Ark together. Their saws and hammers are made of bronze.

Just a little farther on a group of men are working with metals. They have a fierce glowing fire of charcoal, in a furnace in which gold and silver are melted to overlay the boards for the Tabernacle. Other men are working in brass or bronze. They are making weapons, such as spears, shields, swords and arrow-heads; tools, such as saws, chisels, hatchets; implements, such as plowshares, sickles, forceps, knives, nails and needles.

Over here is a group of women working hard. They are weaving linen and woolen cloth. They have a rude loom, but the cloth will be fine, twined linen out of which the curtains for the Tabernacle will be made. Still other women are embroidering the linen in the patterns given them by Moses. Their bronze needles flash in and out very quickly and the beautiful pattern grows under their skillful fingers.

Walk on a little further, and I will show you how the skins of animals are being cured and made into coats and tents and saddles and all sorts of useful things. Some of the skins are dyed red and used for coverings; some of them are made into water bottles to carry water in when we leave the sweet springs far behind. Now you begin to see what a busy, hard-working lot of people we are.



Egyptian Ivory Spoon
—About 2300 B.C.

Egyptian Broom from Thebes—
About 1500 B.C.

Egyptian Mortar and Pestle of Alabaster—About 1425 B.C.

Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art

There is still another workshop you will like very much to see. It is where Bezaleel is bending over his precious stones, shaping them and engraving upon them the names of our twelve tribes. He is making the breastplate for the High Priest. His work is so important and he is so much engrossed that he does not even look up at us. Other people in his shop are working in bronze. Some are making spoons and dishes, lamps and lampstands, chains, bells, earrings, and bracelets. These also are made of pure gold.

If you are not by this time too tired, you will enjoy seeing the men and women who are dyeing the linen and the rams' skins. They gather their colors from many sources, from roots, clay, weeds and the bark and leaves of trees. The reds and blues are clear and lovely, while the purple is fit for a king's robe. Their hands are stained too, but they do not care for that. The bronze vessels in which they heat their dyes rest on great beds of charcoal fire. The dipped linen glows in the sunshine, where it is hung to dry.

When you are tired of the camp, we will go out with the shepherds to watch the flocks of sheep and goats and cattle as they graze the scanty grass. Be watchful, or some hungry wild animal will snatch a little lamb and we cannot afford to lose any little lambs. Twice every day the goats must be milked and the curds prepared. If it were not for this food we would really starve, since it is only on feast days or when we have company like this that we can eat the meat of our flocks. This is work for our mothers and sisters and it keeps them very busy.

Look out towards the plains. Hear the sound of music and marching. Those are our soldiers, who must keep in training to defend us against the wild tribes of the desert. These tribes would like to drive us out, but since our fight with the Amelikites, in which we tri-

umphed so gloriously, they fear us. So long as Joshua commands our armies we do not fear them.

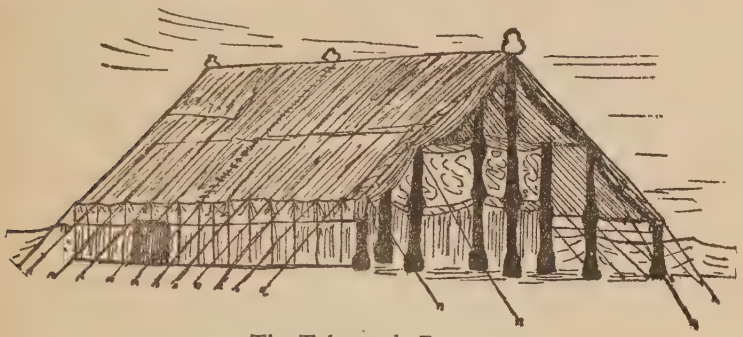
There is one old man whom I am sure you will be interested in. His name is Nimrod. He is a mighty hunter and every day he heads a group of hunters armed with bows and arrows and slings, who go far out among the hills to hunt for game. Sometimes they kill only birds, but sometimes they kill wolves and the great, fierce mountain lions. Then we roast the fresh meat over the coals and really feast.

Do you smell something very sweet and fragrant? Bezaleel is mixing his spices and preparing his anointing oil. The sweet spices are burned for incense when we worship Jehovah. They go up to Him as a sweet symbol of our love. The anointing oil, or unguents, we use for healing or beautifying our bodies. Perhaps you have seen ladies using cosmetics. The unguents are sometimes so used.

We have one friend here in the wilderness without whom we would be very uncomfortable, or we might even die. Next to water, he is our best friend. Can you guess whom I mean? We think so much of this friend that we have special care-takers just for him. They are usually careful, faithful old men or women. When we march they carry this friend in a brass pot with a cover. I see you cannot guess. This friend is fire. His keepers are called fire-keepers. They tend and feed the fires with constant attention, for if the fire dies it is very hard to kindle it again. In the evenings, around the campfires, we listen eagerly to many old tales of how our people used to live, of Abraham and his search after God, and we are thankful we love and worship the God of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

But we do not wish to tire you too much. Perhaps this is enough for one visit. At any rate, we hope you

have seen enough to help you understand our life a little better. We are not idle or lazy. Every day is a constant struggle to get enough to eat, to defend ourselves from cold, to fight off our enemies, to keep brave and smiling and confident that our unseen God is guiding us



The Tabernacle Proper

The Tabernacle proper, or *Mischan,* was built within the larger enclosure, called as a whole the Tabernacle, or Tent of Meeting. The Tabernacle proper was 45 feet long, 15 feet wide, and 15 feet high.

to a better, fuller, happier life in that dear Promised Land.

Hark! Do you hear the bugle call? It is the call to prayer. Bow down your heads before Jehovah, He who leads us like a shining light, whose love shall forever uphold us.

Your faithful friend,
MISHYA.

Related Work. Curds, or cheese, or both may be made.

Models of weapons, tools, and implements may be made of wood or cardboard.

Weaving and embroidering may be done, making the looms for the weaving.

Pictures of camp scenes and industries may be made on paper, or models may be made of the camp with its industries represented.

Models may be made of the Ark of the Covenant, and of the Tabernacle, or Tent of Meeting if desired.

The Ark of the Covenant, regarded as the dwelling place of God,

was at first little more than a rude box made of such wood as the desert afforded. Later it was made of wood overlaid with pure gold, and surmounted by the figures of two angels kneeling, facing each other, with uplifted wings that made an arch. Under these wings in the space between the angels was the Mercy Seat where the high priest sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice for the people on the Day of Atonement. This Ark was placed in the most sacred part of the Tabernacle, called the Holy of Holies. When the people travelled the Ark was carried at the head of the caravan, and when they camped it was reverently cared for in the most secure place. In battle it was carried with them that the enemy might see that God was with the Hebrews. A description of the Ark in much detail is found in the first ten verses of the thirty-seventh chapter of Exodus.

The Tabernacle, or Tent of Meeting, was a large tent, about 150 feet long and 75 feet wide, made for a place of worship and ceremony. The front portion was open as a place of assemblage for the people except for an altar for sacrifices and a laver or cleansing basin. This part of the Tabernacle was known as the outer court. Back of the outer court was a smaller structure about 45 feet long and 15 feet wide, divided into two parts, the outer about 30 feet long and called the Holy Place, the inner about 15 feet long and called the Holy of Holies. The Ark of the Covenant rested in the Holy of Holies. The Holy Place could be entered by the priests only. The Holy of Holies was completely dark, and was entered by the high-priest only, and by him but once a year on the Day of Atonement. The Tabernacle opened to the east.

The partitions within the Tabernacle were of boards overlaid with gold and of linen of the finest quality, beautifully colored in blue, purple, and scarlet. The Tabernacle was made of the most precious material that could be found. It is described in much detail in the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh chapters of Exodus.

THE FIRST ATTEMPT TO ENTER THE PROMISED LAND

Dear Friends:

It took us nearly a year to build the Ark and the Tabernacle just the size and shape God told Moses it

should be. During all that time we camped near the holy mountain, Sinai, where we believed God dwelt in clouds of glory. During this year we accomplished a great deal. For one thing, we got thoroughly rested from our long, hard journey through the desert and had a chance to prepare ourselves for our new travels.

You, see, when we left the land of Egypt, we were under tribal law. We were just a big collection of families or clans, although among us were some very bad individuals. During this year of work on the Tabernacle we became better organized, into groups of thousands, hundreds, and even tens, each with its own judge. Moses worked out for us a body of law and a means of enforcing that law. And not only that; we now had our tabernacle, or church, and a group of men appointed whose duty it was to be priests and conduct the services in the church. Out of a lot of slaves who had been living in Egypt for four hundred years without government or church of their own, Moses made us into a nation with our own laws, and religion, and a respect for each other and God. Do you wonder we thought him a wonderful man and loved him with all our hearts? We were sure he loved us, for even that time we were so wicked and disobedient and made the golden calf, he prayed to God and said, "Forgive these people their transgression. If some one must be punished for this wickedness, I pray you blot my name from the book of life, but forgive them. They knew not how gravely they were sinning." Although God could not accept such a sacrifice on his part, his offer made us see how loving and generous Moses was.

But as time passed many of the people became restless. They became tired of living in the desert and they were always dreaming of that land which had been promised them, so good and beautiful. So they begged Moses to go on. Again we packed our belongings and started.

It was hard to leave our camp, for we did not know what dangers lay in wait for us; but unless we took the risks bravely we knew we could never reach the Promised Land.

The people of Edom would not let us go through their land, so we had to go a long way south and reached, at last, a part of the country that is now known as Moab. Here we stopped, and here Moses selected one or two men from each tribe to go on ahead to spy out the land. A wise leader never sends his men into a strange country without first finding out what he can about it. You see, though we had counted on the hope of possessing this land forever, we now found it was already occupied and by people who did not want us. We would have to conquer them before they would let us in.

We were so excited the morning our men started off on their scouting expedition! They were all big, strong men, who were wise and cautious. They carried food and water and their warm goatskin coats. They had new sandals and they carried new spears. Some of the people cried as they left, for they might never come back. Dan and I ran beside them a long way, but at last we got tired and sat down at the side of the road and watched them out of sight. We did wish Moses had said we might go with them. We could have done lots of things for them; but nobody seemed to think we were much good. Any way we were the first ones to see them coming back. Every day we climbed to the top of the hill and watched for them, but they were gone so long we were nearly discouraged enough to give up. Then, one clear, fine day, we saw them coming. They looked like little boys, they were so far away; but we knew them and ran and shouted, "Our spies are coming back!"

This roused the whole camp and a great crowd of people ran out to meet them. We shouted and cheered for joy. We knew it must be a wonderful place, for

the men brought back great bunches of grapes, so large that it took two men to carry one bunch. We crowded around and asked many questions. The men would not answer until they came to Moses, and then they said, "It is indeed a fair and lovely land, with beautiful rivers and grassy hills for the flocks. It is warm and rich. We brought these grapes to show you."

Then some one shouted, "Come on! We will go there to live! It is our Promised Land."

"But wait," said Joshua, who was the commander of the spies. "There are great giants living there who will kill us all if we so much as try to enter the land. Besides, they have built great walls around their cities and we cannot get in."

This was bad, bad news. We could hardly believe it.

"We have strong men, too," some one called out, "and God has promised that this shall be our land. Have we lost faith in God?"

Even Moses was eager, and said, "Let us go!"

But Caleb and Joshua and all the other men who came back were firm against it, and they persuaded Moses that it would not be wise. So he refused to go or to let the Ark of the Covenant go.

In spite of this ruling, a great number of our soldiers were disobedient and set out to go. They were determined to fight these giants in their walled cities.

They set out, very much excited, and confident, and we watched them go with heavy hearts. All our best fighting men went, leaving us to wait and watch in sorrowful anxiety. Of all those brave soldiers, not one came back. The giants killed them all. In our camp there were left only women and children, old men and young boys. There was weeping and bitter disappointment.

With all our soldiers lying dead on the battle field, we would have to wait until more boys grew up before

we could try again to enter the Promised Land. It meant a long, weary wait. Poor Moses, already old, could not hope to live so long. He had brought us bravely so far, but now he must linger outside with this fair land in sight. It seemed as though his poor old heart was broken. He soon died, and we buried him in the valley of Mount Nebo, from whose summit the Promised Land could be seen.

We lived in the desert many years. It was not all unhappy. We were free. We had our flocks and herds. We roamed the wild, barren hills and dreamed of a better time to come. Joshua became our leader when Moses died, and it was under his wise direction that we came to have a home in that wonderful land that Moses dreamed of, so rich and lovely that it flowed with milk and honey.

I cannot write again so must bid you a long farewell.

Your loving friend,
MISHYA.

Related Work. Make a drawing, or a sand-table model, of Mt. Pisgah overlooking the Promised Land. Mt. Pisgah is one of the higher hills of Mt. Nebo.

THE BURIAL OF MOSES

By Nebo's lonely mountain,
On this side Jordan's wave,
In a vale in the land of Moab,
There lies a lonely grave;
But no man built that sepulchre,
And no man saw it e'er;
For the angels of God upturned the sod,
And laid the dead man there.

That was the grandest funeral
That ever passed on earth;

Michelangelo

Moses

By Courtesy of Perry Pictures Co., Malden, Mass.

Yet no man heard the trampling,
Or saw the train go forth:
Noiselessly as the daylight
Comes when the night is done
And the crimson streak on ocean's cheek
Grows into the great sun;

Noiselessly as the spring-time
Her crown of verdure weaves,
And all the trees on all the hills
Unfold their thousand leaves:
So without sound of music
Or voice of them that wept,
Silently down from the mountain's crown
The great procession swept.

Oh, lonely tomb in Moab's land!
Oh, dark Beth-peor's hill!
Speak to these curious hearts of ours,
And teach them to be still:
God hath his mysteries of grace,
Ways that we cannot tell,
He hides them deep, like the secret sleep
Of him we loved so well.

From *The Burial of Moses,* Cecil Frances Alexander.

God made his grave, to men unknown,
Where Moab's rocks a vale infold,
And laid the aged seer alone
To slumber while the world grows old.

Thus still, whene'er the good and just
Close the dim eye or life and pain,
Heaven watches o'er their sleeping dust
Till the pure spirit comes again.

From *No Man Knoweth His Sepulchre,*
William Cullen Bryant.

STORIES OF THE JUDGES AND THE KINGS

JOSHUA

Moses, the great, wise, loving friend of all the people, was gone, and the Israelites were not yet in possession of the Promised Land. From the mountain heights of the half desert land in which they lay encamped they could see beyond the river, Jordan, the beautiful, fertile plains which God had promised should be theirs, toward which they had toiled all these long, dreary years in the wilderness. But alas! these lovely, fertile plains were already inhabited by strong, rich people, living in walled cities, ruled over by kings. How could the Israelites hope to gain possession?

First, they must have a leader. That was the most important need. He must be brave, wise, a skilled soldier, equipped with a profound faith in the same unseen God who had inspired Moses. Such a man they found in Joshua, the son of Nun.

Joshua had long been the friend of Moses, his first officer and trusted servant. To Joshua, then, the people looked for leadership. He did not disappoint them. He was not only a wise and experienced man, but he was well versed in warfare. He understood human nature. He appreciated also how big a task he had before him and, like the good general that he was, counted his resources in men and supplies and learned all he could about the plans and forces of his enemies. To this end he sent trusted men as spies into the city of

Jericho to bring him back all the information they could before he made an attack upon it.

BEYOND THE JORDAN

On the fertile plains, near the western shore of the river Jordan,[1] there once stood a great city. It was ruled by a king and protected by great walls ten feet high and from ten to thirty feet thick, made of sun-dried brick. There were great gates to the city which were kept locked by night and guarded by day. In one place at least a stairway of nineteen steps led up from the outside of the wall. At intervals in this wall that surrounded the city were towers where soldiers were stationed on watch for any signs of danger. Even small houses were built upon the walls. The name of this city was Jericho.[2]

[1] **The Jordan.** The Jordan river rises from between the eastern and the central mountain ranges of northern Palestine. The two mountain ranges begin in the north with the Lebanon mountains, of which Mount Hebron, the highest peak, rises over nine thousand feet above sea level. The Jordan, flowing southward, lies deep in the valley, which widens out into fertile, beautiful plains on either side. Along its course it forms first a little marshy lake called Lake Huleh. Then it narrows again to a river, which continues until it once more widens out into the Sea of Galilee. This sea is about thirteen miles long and six wide. It is known as the sea which Jesus loved. Leaving the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan flows still directly south, deeper and deeper in its valley until it empties into the Dead Sea. Here it is over twelve hundred feet below sea level. This sea is forty-seven miles long and ten miles wide and has no outlet, so that its waters evaporate leaving their salts. This causes the waters of the Dead Sea to be so much more salt than the waters of the oceans that nothing can live in them. The climate here is excessively hot. The damp heat is stifling and the mosquitoes are innumerable, but the soil is fertile.

[2] **Jericho.** The City of Palms. Jericho was one of the walled cities that lay deep in the valley of the Jordan. For safety the people lived in walled cities and went out from them to cultivate the land during the day. Jericho, like Ur and Haran, was a moon god city. This god was called Yareakh.

In one of these small houses upon the walls there once lived a young woman named Rahab. From her high windows Rahab looked out eastward over the hills and plains to the waters of the river Jordan, or westward to the far distant sea; while below her lay the teeming, crowded city with its many voices, now rising loud and shrill in barter, or joyous in carnival, or hushed in midnight slumber. Rahab was beautiful and young and gay. She loved to mingle with the crowds of people, to see strange, new sights. She was not afraid.

One day, as she walked along the streets she met two men whom she knew at once to be strangers. They were tall and strong, dressed simply but bearing in their faces the look of men strange to the ways of cities. In reality they were soldiers, sent out by the Israelitish captain, Joshua, whose armies lay beyond the Jordan, to find out all they could about Jericho. As Rahab passed them in the streets she smiled and said,

"Ye are strangers in Jericho. Seek ye a lodging?"

"Yes," answered the taller of the two, "we are strangers. We seek a place to rest."

"My home is near," said Rahab. "Enter and rest." And she led them up the stone steps to her home on the wall. There she gave them food and wine and they sat together, resting and talking.

As they sat talking there came a great, thundering knock on the door of the little house. When Rahab opened the door there stood the king's messenger, and he commanded,

"Bring out the spies of our enemies who were seen going into your house!"

"Spies!" said Rahab innocently. "It is true that two men came to visit me, but they went away just before evening. They went in the direction of the gates. If you go quickly, you may yet overtake them."

The king's messenger wasted no time but turned and

ran quickly towards the gates. But Rahab ran back to her guests and cried,

"Is it true that ye are spies?"

"We are sent by our captain, Joshua," they answered.

"They search for you, but I will hide you under the flax[3] on my roof. Terror has fallen on all the city because of you. We have heard how you escaped out of Egypt through the Red Sea by the help of your great God. We have heard of your wonderful leader, and how he carries that same great God with him into battle. Our hearts and the heart of the king are melted within us for terror. There is no more courage in any man because of you. Now swear!" she continued earnestly. "Show me a little kindness in return for the kindness I am showing you and save my people when ye shall come into the city. My father and my brothers, my mother and my sisters, save them from death!"

"It is true that you have shown us kindness," the man answered. "If you will save us, we will save them. But tell no man our business."

"The whole city searches for you even now," said Rahab, "but I will let you down over the wall with this cord, and so you may escape. But when ye come again, spare my house and my people."

So she let them down outside the walls, and when they were down they whispered softly,

"Bind a scarlet cord in your window that we may know your house when our victorious armies come into Jericho."

Then the two spies returned to Joshua and told him all.

"It is true that the king and all the people are already terrified. The fame of our God has gone before us."

"It is well," answered Joshua. "I know now how to attack."

[3] **Flax.** This is the plant from which linen is made. It was probably stored on the roof until needed.

So when they had crossed the Jordan at a narrow ford, the priests bearing the Ark before them, Joshua told them his plan.

"We will capture the city by a trick," he said. "Our men report that the people are already in terror of us. We will terrify them still more and when they have become utterly panic stricken we will raise a great shout of victory and rush in and possess the city. Once a day for six days we will encircle the city in silence but in full war dress, forty thousand soldiers with their arms. The priests shall go first, bearing on their shoulders the Ark of the Covenant.[4] On the seventh day these priests shall blow a mighty blast on their rams' horns, all the soldiers shall raise a mighty shout, and these people during these seven days will be so impressed by the fear of our God, that they will surrender before a blow is struck."

"What is that thunder close to the walls of my city?" asked the king of Jericho.

"That is the marching Israelites, O king. They bear before them the Ark of the mighty God who parted the waters of the Red Sea for them. They encompass our city."

Slowly the terror grew within the hearts of the people.

Next day again, silently, except for the steady tramp, tramp of thousands of marching men, the Israelites encircled the city. In Rahab's window a scarlet cord was bound and Rahab's people looked out of the window and whispered to the soldiers.

And Joshua said to the two spies, "When we shall come into the city, go and take out Rahab and her people according to your promise. But all else in the city must be utterly destroyed. All the gold and silver and all the

[4] **The Ark.** Wherever they carried the Ark with them, the people believed that God went with them.

vessels of brass and iron belong to God; but all else, every living thing, man, woman or child, even the animals, even every house and the wall itself must be altogether destroyed.

So they circled the city seven times and on the seventh day, when the priests blew on the rams' horns, it came to pass that the walls of the city fell before them and Joshua and his soldiers, rushing in, utterly destroyed it.

So the Israelites came into possession of a small part of the Promised Land.[5]

Related Work. Make a sand-table model, or a drawing, showing the Jordan River, the Salt, or Dead, Sea, Jericho, and Ai.

Describe the method of making linen from flax. The flax plant, which is about two feet in height, is pulled or cut and allowed to "ret," or rot for several weeks; then it is dried and the leaves and blossoms are removed; the stalks are then broken all the way along so that the pith and woody parts may easily be removed from the fiber. The fiber is cleaned of woody and other matter by drawing the broken stalks over a kind of comb with very fine teeth. When thus cleaned the fiber is ready to spin into thread.

Compare the hand methods of spinning and weaving with present-day methods.

Locate the lands of Edom and Moab.

THE SONG OF DEBORAH[1]

That the leaders took the lead in Israel,
That the people volunteered eagerly,
Bless Jehovah!
Hear, O kings,

[5] **The Conquest of Canaan.** Under Joshua's leadership the Israelites at this time captured Jericho and the city of Ai, which was near Jerusalem. They further made a league or covenant with the Gideonites. This was the way that they secured their first foothold in the Promised Land. They could not march right in and take possession of the land, but must first conquer the people already occupying it. Slowly, very slowly, they succeeded in making homes for themselves in Palestine.

[1] **The song.** This is one of the noblest and oldest poems written by the Hebrews. It celebrates a victory over the Canaanites where the

Give ear, O rulers,
I myself, yea, I will sing to Jehovah,
I will sing praise to Jehovah, the God of Israel.

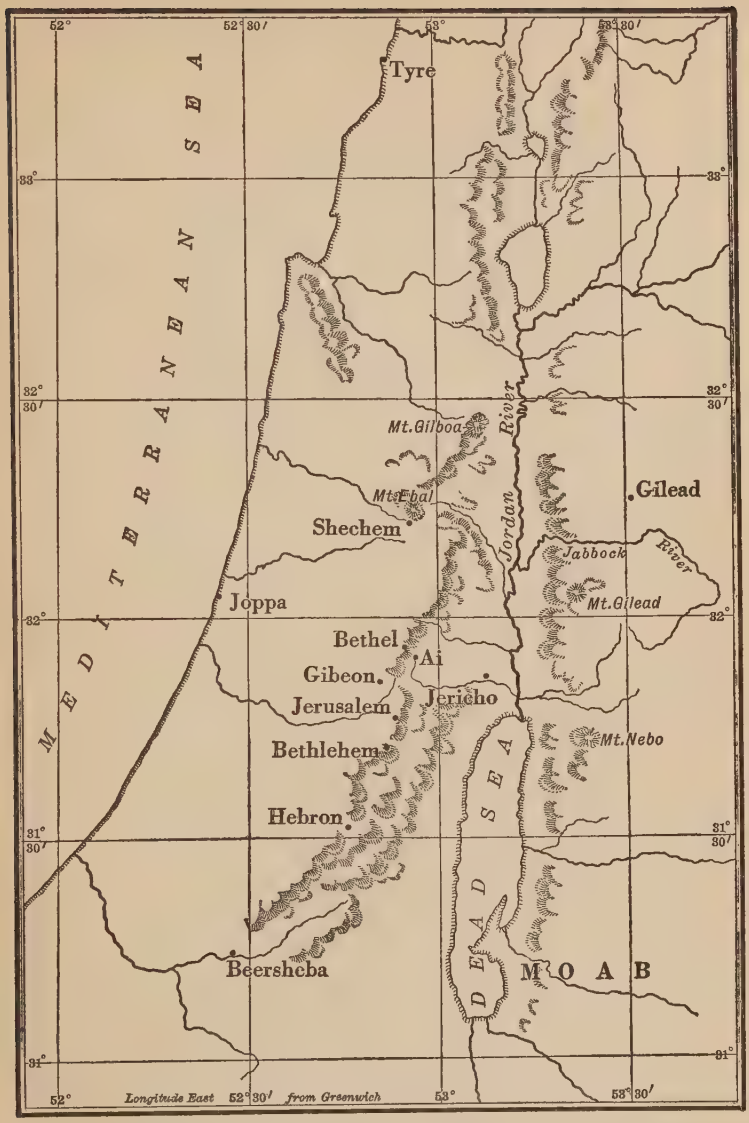
Jehovah, when thou wentest forth from Seir,
When thou marchest from the land of Edom,
The earth trembled violently;
The heavens also dripped,
Yea, the clouds dropped water;
The mountains quaked before Jehovah,
Yon Sinai, before Jehovah, the God of Israel.

In the days of Shamgar, the son of Anath,
In the days of Jael, the highways were unused,
And travellers walked by roundabout paths.
The rulers ceased in Israel, they ceased,
Until thou, Deborah, didst arise,
Until thou didst arise, a mother in Israel.
A shield was not seen in five cities,
Nor a spear among forty thousand.

My heart is with the commanders of Israel,
Who volunteered readily among the people;
Bless Jehovah!
You who ride on tawny asses,
You who sit on rich saddle-cloths,
And you who walk by the way, proclaim it.
Far from the sound of the division of spoil,
In the places where the water is drawn,
There let them rehearse the righteous acts of Jehovah,
Even the righteous acts of his rule in Israel.

Hebrew forces were controlled and inspired by a woman, Deborah, the Prophetess. She was a woman who was highly honored in her own community. She had keen judgment and understanding, also courage and that decision of character required in a leader. She did not herself take a sword and go into battle, but she chose a commander, Barak. She planned the battle. She inspired the soldiers. Under her leadership the battle was won.

The poem tells the story very vividly. It is not known who wrote it, but it seems probable that its author was a woman, possibly Deborah herself. The poem was probably sung by the women as a song of triumph when the men returned from battle.



The Land of Canaan After Its Conquest by the Israelites

Then the people of Jehovah went down to the gates, crying,
Arise, arise, strike up the song!
Arise, Barak,[2] be strong,
Take thy captives, son of Abinoam![3]
So the remnant went down against the powerful,
The people of Jehovah against the mighty:
From Ephraim[4] they rushed into the valley,
Thy brother Benjamin among thy peoples;
From Machir[5] went down commanders,
And from Zebulun[6] those who carry the marshall's staff.
And the princes of Issachar[7] were with Deborah;
And Naphthali[8] was even so with Barak,
Into the valley they rushed forth at his back.

By the brooks of Reuben great were the resolves!
Why did thou sit amongst the sheepfolds,
Listening to the pipings of the flocks?
By the brooks of Reuben there were great questionings!
Gilead remained beyond Jordan.
And Dan, why does he stay by the ships as an alien?
Asher sits still by the shore of the sea
And remains by its landing places.

Zebulun was a people who exposed themselves to deadly peril,
And Naphthali on the heights of an open field.
Kings came, they fought:
They fought, the kings of Canaan,
At Taanach[9] by the waters of Megiddo;[10]
They took no booty of silver,
From heaven fought the stars,
From their courses fought against Sisera.[11]
The river Kishon[12] swept them away,
The ancient river, the river Kishon.
O my soul, march on with strength!
Then did the horse-hoofs resound
With the galloping, galloping of their steeds.

[2] Bā′ rak.
[3] Ä bi nō′ am.
[4] Eph′ ra im.
[5] Mā′ shir.
[6] Zĕb′ u lun.
[7] Ĭs′ sa char.
[8] Năph′ ta li.
[9] Tāā′ nach.
[10] Mĕ gid′ do.
[11] Sĭ′ se ra.
[12] Kĭ′ shon.

Curse Meroz,[13] said the messenger of Jehovah,
Curse bitterly its inhabitants;
For they came not to the help of Jehovah,
To the help of Jehovah against the mighty.

Blessed above women shall Jael[14] be,
That wife of Heber,[15] the Kenite,[16]
Blessed above all nomad women!
Water he asked, milk she gave;
Curdled milk she brought him in a bowl fit for lords,
She put her hand to the tent-pin,
Even her right hand to the workman's hammer;
And she struck Sisera, she crushed his head,
She shattered, she pierced his temple.
At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay still,
At her feet he bowed, he fell;
Where he bowed, there he fell a victim slain.

Through the window peered and loudly cried
The mother of Sisera, through the lattice;
"Why is his chariot so long in coming?
Why tarry the hoof-beats of his chariotry?"
The wisest of her ladies answered her,
Yea, she herself answered her question,
"Are they not indeed finding, dividing the spoil?
A woman or two for each of the warriors;
For Sisera a spoil of dyed stuffs,
A spoil of dyed stuffs embroidered,
A piece or two of embroidery for his neck?"

So shall all thine enemies perish, O Jehovah;
But they who love him shall be as the sun, rising in his invincible splendor.

As arranged by CHARLES FOSTER KENT—*The Founders and Rulers of United Israel,* pp. 34-37, Scribners.

[13] Mĕ′ roz. [15] Hĕ′ ber. [16] Kē′ nite.
[14] Jăl.

GIDEON[1]

UNDER the shade of a great oak tree, high up on the side of a wide, sloping valley,[2] Gideon is threshing his barley. It is full summer time and the land around and below him is beautiful with green grass, flowers, and ripe grain ready to be cut. The sun is very hot, but the threshing floor has been placed where the shade of the great trees will shield it in part. Here Gideon beats and lifts and beats again with his flail, then draws the straw aside, and sweeps the golden grain into a basket. This he lifts high above his head and allows the grain to fall to the floor again that the wind may blow away the chaff. Beside the threshing floor stands a great wine press.

Suddenly Gideon pauses in his work and, shielding his eyes with his hands, looks intently out over the shimmering, lovely valley before him. Far in the distance he sees the river Jordan like a silver ribbon. But between the river and himself he sees something that makes him very angry. A great mob like an army, of the half wild men of the deserts beyond the Jordan, are riding on camels through the cultivated fields, stealing and destroying as they go. Gideon's bronzed face flushes a still darker red. He clenches his hands and stamps on the threshing floor.

[1] **Gideon.** Gĭd′ ē on. A strong, wise man whom the people honored and made judge.

[2] **The valley of the Jordan.** Here we see the Hebrews are becoming agriculturists. They were changing from the nomad life of shepherds to a more settled state as farmers and were already beginning to feel the need of a central form of government. This of course would mean a king at its head. They had really just at this time no definite form of government. The different tribal groups lived in widely separated places. They did not act together at any time unless some local leader like Gideon was strong enough to be generally obeyed.

"Of what use is it," he mutters, "to toil over our crops, to plant grain and cultivate the olive and vineyards, if these thieving people of the desert are allowed to steal and trample and burn as they like? Is it not enough that they have killed my brothers? Must I also stand and watch them spoil our crops? I will not endure it. I will call my clansmen together and fight these Bedouin robbers." [3]

"Ho, messenger!" he cried, and struck his hands together.

At the call a young man came from behind the wine press and said,

"You called, master?"

"Yes, Jemal," answered Gideon. "Do you see yonder thieving desert people like grasshoppers, destroying all the fruits of our labors?"

"I see them, master, but what can be done? They are bold and swift. If we ride out against them they will first laugh at us, then slay us."

"If we rode alone, my Jemal, they would surely do so. But what if we ride with a great army of men? I want you to send ten swift runners out to our people [4] bidding them gather together here as soon as they can. We will drive these robbers from our country."

"I go, master," said Jemal, laughing. "I go gladly. I hope you will let me go with you to fight. Fighting suits me better than this dull life of plowing and reaping."

"You shall fight, Jemal. We will need every loyal man to fight for Israel."

When the messenger had gone Gideon prayed to Jehovah for courage and skill to outwit his enemies. He felt very sure that Jehovah wished him to fight

[3] **Bedouin.** Desert people who did not cultivate the land themselves but robbed and pillaged the fields of those who did.

[4] **Our people.** The Hebrews, or Israelites, Gideon's fellow clansmen.

against these enemies of his people; but to make quite sure, he said to him,

"If you will save Israel by me, I will put a piece of wool on the floor and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that you will save Israel by my hand."

And in the morning Gideon wrung a whole bowlful of dew out of the sheep-skin though the ground was quite dry of dew.

But Gideon was not quite satisfied even yet, and said,

"O God, do not be angry with me, but let me try this thing once more. Let it now be dry only upon the fleece and upon all the ground let there be dew."

And God did so that night, for it was dry upon the fleece, but all the ground around was wet with dew.

By this time all the Hebrew clans who lived near, Zebulun, Naphtali, and Manasseh, Gideon's own clan or tribe, were come in response to Jemal's call and were ready to go out and fight with Gideon.

Now Gideon wanted only those most brave and eager, so he said,

"If any of you do not wish to fight or are afraid, you can go back home."

So many, many of them went away.

Still there were more than Gideon needed, so he said,

"Go down now, all of you, to the water and drink."

So they went down to drink and about three hundred of them dipped up the water in their hands and lapped it as dogs do. These three hundred men Gideon chose to go with him.

Then Gideon armed these three hundred men in a curious fashion. To each man he gave a pitcher with a lighted torch inside to carry in one hand. He also gave to each man a trumpet to carry in his other hand. Their swords, of course, were in their girdles close about their bodies.

"Now," said Gideon, "steal softly to the camp where these wild men are sleeping. Watch me and do just as I do. When I blow my trumpet, then do you blow too. When I throw down my pitcher and seize my lighted torch, do you likewise. When I shout, 'The sword of the Lord and Gideon,' do you shout also."

In the sleeping host of the wild men of the desert the watch had just been changed. Each man stirred a little in his sleep but heard the cry, "All is well," and sank into deeper slumber.

Then came a wild, high trumpet blast, a shrill clatter of broken jars, a blaze of light and the fierce battle cry from three hundred throats, "The sword of the Lord and Gideon." The desert men leaped to their feet and drew their swords. They were heavy with sleep. The lights dazzled them. They struck out blindly and in the confusion they killed each other.

Then they ran. Oh, how they ran! Fast, faster! Anywhere to get away! But Gideon and his brave, eager clansmen were following after them.

"For the Lord and Gideon," they cry. "Strike now. Strike! Strike!"

So they drove the Bedouin people back across the Jordan, back and back to their own wild lands. The chiefs of the Bedouins, Zebah [5] and Zelmunna, they slew also because they had slain Gideon's brothers.[6] And great numbers of the people were slain also.

When Gideon returned home, the people said to him, "Be our king and rule over us."

But Gideon was wise and said, "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son; but God shall rule over you." [7]

[5] Zē′ bah. Zel mŭn′ na.

[6] A blood feud which demanded a life for a life.

[7] A ruler. Gideon did not become a king, but he ruled as a judge over some of the Israelites.

Related Work. A model of a flail may be made. One form of flail was made by tying to the end of a handle about five feet long a stick one inch in diameter by two feet long, leaving four or five inches of cord between the two sticks which were tied so that the short piece would move about easily and strike the grain along its full length. The flail was used until very recently for threshing grain, even in parts of this country. Compare ancient methods of harvesting and threshing grain with methods of today.

Presses for making wine and olive oil were of very simple form, using at first the principle of the lever. Grapes were often tramped upon with the bare feet in a large vessel to crush out the juice, and the pulp strained through a textile.

SAMUEL[1]

THERE was once a woman, named Hannah, who grieved night and day that she had no little son. It seemed to her that just to have a little boy of her own would make her so happy that she would never want anything else so long as she lived.

So she prayed to God and promised Him that if He would send her a son, she would give the child back to Him to serve all his life as a priest in the temple.[2]

By and by God answered her prayer and a little son was born to Hannah. She called his name Samuel, which means "God hears."

[1] **Samuel.** Samuel was the last and greatest of the judges. As he grew older he drew around him groups of young men whom he inspired and taught. It might almost be said he established a school for prophets. He himself was respected among the people as one who could foretell events, make magic or reveal knowledge from God. His work as judge was carried on to the end of his life. Those duties, together with the service he rendered his people by selecting two kings, constituted his life's work of greatest value.

[2] **The priest.** The priest performed the daily sacrifices. There were two kinds of sacrifice: those consisting of flour or bread, oil and incense, which were thanksgiving offerings; and second those consisting of the blood of animals as atonement for sin. A certain portion of these sacrifices was set aside as food for the priests.

That year when Elkanah, the little boy's father, went up to offer the yearly sacrifice, he said to Hannah, "Will you go up with me to the sacrifice?" [3]

And she said, "No, I will not go up now. But I will wait until the child is weaned and then I will take him and leave him there that he may serve God forever."

True to her vow, while Samuel was still but a tiny boy, his mother took him up to the temple and left him with the priests [4] to be trained in the service of God.

And she was very, very happy over it all and sang a long, happy song about it which she made up herself, all about God's goodness and the power and glory of the Lord.

Little Samuel lived very happily with the old priest, Eli, and helped him with the service. When he did this work he wore a linen ephod, or priest's robe, tied full about his little body. But for every day use he wore the little coats[5] which his mother made and brought to him each year when she came up to the sacrifice.

She made these coats very beautifully, of lovely blue or scarlet cloth embroidered in cunning patterns, stitching into them all the loving service which she would have given to her little boy had he remained at home with her.

So Samuel grew up in the house of God and all the people of Israel knew that he was to be a priest and a prophet. When he grew old and wise enough, he judged his people justly.

He himself never came to be king; but he selected and anointed Israel's first king, Saul, and also the second king, David.

[3] **Yearly sacrifice.** This was the feast of tabernacles or booths.

[4] **The priests who taught Samuel.** These were Eli and his sons, Hophin and Phinehas.

[5] **Coat.** A close fitting, linen garment, extending to the knees and worn next to the body.

SAUL[1]

HIGH up above the village of Ramah on a plateau of a low mountain range overlooking a lovely, fertile valley in the full bloom of early summer, a feast is being prepared. While the sunshine is warm, yet at this height the wind has a keen nip, just enough to whet the appetite.

This feast, like our own barbecues, is being prepared out of doors and the tantalizing odor of fresh, roasting meat is borne on the breeze to the villagers below.

Great spreading trees make a refreshing shade over the heaps of stone upon which the fires are built and upon which the tender young lamb of the morning sacrifice is roasting.

No table is set, but wide, flat stones serve as seats. Wine is cooling in skin bottles swung from the branches of trees. Platters are heaped high with thin cakes of

[1] **Saul.** The Hebrews were in partial possession only of the Promised Land. That is, they dwelt in Canaan, but so, also, did the Philistines, the Canaanites and other tribes, and the Hebrews were in constant warfare and danger of extinction both by extermination and loss of racial identity by intermarriage.

They were dropping the customs of their older nomad life and becoming agriculturists. The land was rich and beautiful. The Hebrews were morally and ethically superior to its other inhabitants, but they were not well enough organized. The old tribal form of government was no longer sufficient for their needs. They suffered for lack of a single leader, one who should be able to command the allegiance of them all through his personal prowess as well as through appeal to their religious faith.

The more thoughtful among them had come to Samuel, as their foremost judge and prophet, to ask him to select a king for them. This Samuel was loath to do since it meant the loss of his own power and a monarchy would be an untried political policy for his people. But he was compelled to yield to the wishes of the people.

In the little tribe of Benjamin he knew a man named Kish, a rich man of good birth. This Kish had a son, Saul. He was a handsome fellow, tall and majestic in appearance, of undoubted courage and of a passionately religious nature. Samuel chose him to be king and planned an impressive coronation.

bread. Golden slices of cheese flank these platters of bread. Purple-hearted dates and red pomegranates are piled high in reed baskets.

A hush lies over everything, not just quiet, but a tenseness like that we feel ourselves on the eve of some great event or momentous decision. Only a servant or two come or go softly. They turn the meat over the glowing coals, feed the fires and drive away the hungry dogs that seem to have evil designs on the savory food. A group of guests, about thirty in number, are waiting under the shade of a tree, but no host is in sight.

At the gate of the village below an old man is waiting. Under his lifted hand he peers anxiously out toward the low hills. Plainly he is expecting some one of importance. He is tall and stooped and his long, snowy hair and beard give him the appearance of a shaggy old lion, though the look in his dark eyes is mild and tender. His dress is a flowing robe of white linen, so fine in texture that it looks like silk. Over his shoulders is the ephod of the priest.[2] He is Israel's high priest, Samuel, her judge, her prophet and seer, and he is waiting to receive and greet him who is to be her king.

One of the gliding attendants is at his side.

"Is the feast prepared, O my Thar?" the old man questioned.

"It awaits thy guest and thy good pleasure, O my lord."

"It is well. Our guest cometh."

Up the long slope of the mountain two men are coming. They look weary and travel-stained, and not at all like guests of honor bidden to a feast. Yet, as they come nearer, one of them is seen at once to be of noble bearing. He is a tall, handsome youth, head and shoulders above his companion. He carries himself with all the poise of a young prince. He is clothed in a rough

[2] **The ephod.** The sacred vestment and symbol of the priest.

garment of striped linen and over his shoulders is knotted a sheep-skin, more for protection from the cold during sleep than as an article of dress. On his feet are sandals of leather. His head is bare and the black hair falls in waving curls over his shoulders. He is Saul, the son of Kish, in search of his father's straying cattle, come now with a little silver in his hand to ask the seer if he knows aught of their whereabouts. His servant, the little man who trots beside him, has said that Samuel is able to tell where lost things may be found through his powers as a seer.

As they come closer, and Saul catches sight of Samuel, he is ashamed of his own appearance and would have turned back; but Samuel, stepping forward with stately eagerness, holds out both hands in welcome, saying,

"Thou art expected. Sit and permit my servants to remove thy sandals and pour cool water over thy feet."

Saul, too much amazed to think, can only murmur, "Greetings, O Seer! Take the thanks of weary travellers." How can he offer this stately stranger silver or ask him the whereabouts of his father's asses?

But Samuel, as though divining his thoughts, said, "Thy father's asses are found and returned to their master. And now thy father is anxious to have thee back. Grieve him not. Break bread with me, refresh thyself and return to thy home, for in thee are all the hopes of Israel placed this day. Behold thou this fair land spread out before thee like a garden? In it thy brethren dwell, not as lords nor rulers, but in small, mean ways. They till the land. They feed the flocks upon a thousand hills, while the haughty Philistine, the Hittite, the Canaanite sit at ease and rule the world. Is this all we are to expect from the promise of Jehovah to lead our fathers out of slavery, through the wilderness into a land flowing with milk and honey? And thou, the kingliest of youths, wert thou born to herd

thy father's flocks all thy life? I will not believe Jehovah hath so treasured up the deathless seed of Abraham."

As he spoke, a fierce, wild light glowed in his eyes. His shoulders lifted. His whole face shone. Then he clapped his hands and a little group [3] of men appeared with flutes and harps and tambourines, and as they played they danced and threw themselves into wild and grotesque postures in a frenzy of religious fervor. Saul's eyes began to glow. His heart beat hard and fast.

"Enough!" cried Samuel. "Bring forth the feast. The choice meat hath been roasted for thee. Of it I have sacrificed to God. Its odor hath gone up to Jehovah, a sweet savor of a faithful heart in Israel. Eat, Saul! And drink the wine, that like a warm, sweet flame shall stir they heart for God."

Saul drank and ate, for he was hungry. And as he ate, a strange, new spirit seemed to flame up within his heart. He brooded upon his nation's present sorrows and passed from that to thrills of ecstasy over her glorious future.

"Hath God indeed redeemed a race of slaves for them to remain servants in their own land? Surely some glorious thing is yet to come out of Israel and I, even I, must help my little to forward the mighty purpose of Jehovah. Use me, Jehovah!" he cried aloud, "I fight for thee and Israel."

Then, at a signal from Samuel, which they understood, all the serving people and guests disappeared and Saul and Samuel were left alone upon the windy height overlooking Palestine. Around them were sunshine and beauty, the majesty of the mountain and sea. Saul fell upon his knees and Samuel, pouring upon his head a sacred oil, said in a voice of deep sweetness and power,

"In the name of the Most High Jehovah, God of our

[3] **Dervishes.** Men who danced and writhed in working themselves up into a spell of religious fervor.

fathers, of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, I anoint thee.[4] Rise, Saul, King of Israel!"

And Saul rose up blindly, the words still ringing in his ears. His great ecstasy could not longer be contained but burst bounds and he prophesied in wild, burning words of Israel's greatness, of victories to come in God's name, even of One who should redeem Israel. Then he staggered away in the direction of his home.

Now, though Samuel had anointed Saul, and Saul in his heart felt himself to be a king, it still remained to be seen if the people would accept and publicly crown him. So Saul went home and once again took up his humble duties on his father's farm. But you may be sure that he thought long and deeply over all that had occurred. He must have wanted to make sure what he ought to do so as to justify Samuel's choice.

As he was returning from plowing in his father's fields with a yoke of oxen, almost a month later, a little group of men came running across the ploughed land to him in great distress. They were weeping and tearing at their hair, and they all cried out at once so that Saul could scarcely understand what they said.

"The Philistines! The Philistines are upon us! They have besieged and conquered Jabesh in Gilead. Jabesh hath offered to yield if so be he may keep his honor unstained."

"In that case he hath already yielded," cried Saul, his great head drooping in shame.

"Yes, yes!" they answered. "But the wicked idolater Nahash will only accept their surrender on condition that the right eye of every prisoner of war may be bored out. A disgrace! A burning disgrace and reproach upon all Israel!"

"It is more than can be borne!" cried Saul, his dark

[4] **Anoint.** The oil of the olive was poured from a horn or skin over the head as a sign of consecration.

eyes blazing with wrath. "It shall not be borne! Jehovah be my witness! I will teach these Ammonites that Israel hath a king."

Seizing a sword from the belt of a soldier, he thrust it into the throats of both the poor patient oxen that had been ploughing for him. Each in turn fell forward upon its knees in a flood of its own hot blood. Then Saul cut the oxen into small pieces. He worked with furious speed. The beads of sweat on his face mingled with the spattered drops of blood. The men watched him in awe.

"Here!" he cried, snatching some of the dripping pieces, "Go ye to every man in Israel. Show to him this flesh. Tell him Saul and Israel call upon him to fight for the glory of Jehovah. Command them all to gather here. And whosoever does not come forth after Saul and Samuel, so shall his oxen afterward be hewn into pieces."

Then terror fell upon all the people and they rallied to Saul's standard as one man. He drilled them upon the plains of Bezek. A mighty army they were, strong and brave, now that they had found a fearless leader. And Saul rode at their head, proud and confident.

"Tell our brothers in Gilead that to-morrow shall be the day of their deliverance," he cried. A mighty shout went up and down the lines, a battle cry, "For Israel and Jehovah!"

Therefore, the besieged Israelites, pretending to yield, sent word to Nahash:

"To-morrow we will come out and you may do with us as you will."

So the Philistines feasted and slept. In the early morning, before it was yet broad day, Saul, dividing his forces, crept in upon them from three directions and with wild cries his men overwhelmed and killed many of them. And they fought hard in hand-to-hand con-

flict until nearly noon, but in the end the Philistines either were lying in bleeding heaps or had fled each man for himself from the wrath of Saul.

Then all the people accompanied Saul on his return to Gilgal. With shouts and tears and in wild frenzies of delight they called out, saying, "We have found us a king! Come now, offer unto God sacrifice and anoint Saul, for he shall rule over us." The dancing girls came with tambourine and harp. Then came the howling dervishes. The soldiers threw down their weapons. Little children danced and sang. The sacrificial fires were lit and from a hundred rude altars the sweet odor of thanksgiving went up to God.

And Samuel laid a crown on Saul's head and placed a scepter in his hands. Stretching out his own hands in blessing he cried, "In the name of Jehovah and all the people, I, Samuel, crown thee King of Israel." [5]

Related Work. Locate on the map Gilgal near Jericho, and also the village of Ramah.

HOW SAUL FAILED GOD

Over the burning sands of the wilderness a weary multitude was toiling. Men were there, wild, bronzed soldiers with swords, and bows and arrows. Some carried shields, but others had only staves and slings. Women, with little children in their arms, struggled after the men. Boys and girls of all ages plodded wearily along. Their sheep and cattle were herded in the rear. Over many miles the caravan had struggled, tired and discouraged almost to death.

These were Egypt's escaped slaves, on their march

[5] **Public recognition as king.** This did not occur until Saul had led the armies to a great victory over the Philistines.

to the Promised Land. At their head, mounted on a small mule, rode an old man. Brave Moses, the man with a vision, the man whom God used, was leading his people. Gone was the first high enthusiasm for freedom as they toiled on through burning heat, over deep sand that cut their feet, often thirsty, often hungry, fighting against wild beasts and wilder men, but still dreaming of the Promised Land, still believing in their God.

Hark! What is that wild cry? Too well they know. Some hostile tribe of desert men who have lain in wait in ambush are now attacking their comrades ahead. Mounted on a beautiful horse their military leader, Joshua, dashes back along the line. At his shouted orders the men form into groups of tens and hundreds and march forward. Fortune favors them, for they are near the top of a steep hill. Against this they form so that they may not be attacked from behind. To the top of this steep hill Moses is carried and from there he directs and encourages his people.

There is no time to lose. The Amalekites are upon them. The fierce, wild clangor of slashing swords, the hand-to-hand struggle,—the death groan, the shriek of wounded animals, all mingle in a terrible confusion of sound. Only the sudden desert darkness halts the battle and Israel is left, still bleeding and sore, with her dead scattered over the hot sands.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, 'Write this for a memorial in a book and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua:[1] for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.'"

[1] "**Write this in a book.**" Such writing as was done at this time was probably done in the cuneiform characters of the Babylonians on stone or clay tablets. The characters were either cut in the soft sandstone or were formed in clay-surfaced stone and allowed to harden.

"**Rehearse it in the ears of Joshua.**" This tradition telling of their annals by those older to those younger, was a favorite way of these people of keeping their history and, indeed, all their knowledge alive.

After they had buried their dead with bitter tears and bound up their wounds they crept on.

But now Israel has come to the Promised Land. Forgotten is all the weariness of that fearful pilgrimage. Moses lies in his lonely mountain grave, and Joshua, too, has gone. But around countless rude hearths the stories of that journey are told and retold and among them this one of the battle with the Amalekites. Always the graybeard who tells the story murmurs at its close, "The day shall come when our God shall wipe out their remembrance from under heaven."

Now a great and wonderful good has come to Israel. High and low are rejoicing because for the first time they have a handsome, brave king.

"Long live our king!" they cry. "Long live Saul! Now let the Philistines and all our enemies beware! Saul shall smite in the name of Jehovah and all shall fall down before him."

But the old men whispered among themselves, "Shall not Saul seek out the Amalekites and wipe out our blood-debt? Surely it is a command from God and he will send us the victory."

Samuel remembered too, and when Saul had subdued the Philistines and while his army was still strong and well organized, he said, "Go now and smite Amalek. Utterly destroy all that they have and spare not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and ass, camel and sheep."

In their secure walled city to the south the Amalekites went about their business. Men bartered and feasted. Women laughed in the sunshine by the wells. Little children played about without fear. King Agog rode in his chariot through the streets of the city.

Quietly the Hebrews crept out of the valleys, hun-

dreds of soldiers, armed and revengeful. So sudden was the encounter, so desperate the attack, that their old enemies went down like sheep before wolves. The Hebrew soldiers captured the king alive; but all else, mothers and little babies, old men and little children, they utterly destroyed. Then one of the soldiers said, "It is a pity to waste all these fine lambs. Let us not destroy them but carry them home and we will sacrifice a portion of them to Jehovah and feast upon the rest."

"It is the king's command that we kill all."

Then many cried together, "Come, King Saul! We have won this victory for you. Without us you could do nothing. We wish to carry away this King Agog and these fat lambs. Agog will make sport for us and the lambs will make a rare feast."

So Saul yielded to the wishes of his soldiers and carried away King Agog and the fat lambs. These he brought gaily to Samuel, but Samuel, remembering the command, said sorrowfully, "Hath the Lord as great delight in sacrifices and burnt offerings as in obedience? Behold, obedience is better than sacrifice. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord by disobeying, He has rejected you."

Not long after, Samuel began to search for another man to be Israel's king. He knew that one who cannot be trusted to obey is not the one to be trusted to rule.

THE STORY OF DAVID

Once Samuel fully realized that his disobedience proved that Saul was unworthy of his throne, he cast about to find a nobler man to be king—one who would be true to God. He scarcely knew where to look. He asked guidance of God, therefore, and in answer to his

prayer found his thoughts turning more and more to Jesse, a man of Bethlehem. Jesse had eight fine sons and Samuel began to hope that among them he might find one fit to be ruler over Israel. He felt very humble, however, because he had made such a mistake about Saul. He distrusted his own judgment and pleaded very earnestly for God's help.

He went down to Bethlehem, taking with him a horn of sacred oil, such as the priests used in anointing. He announced that he had come to sacrifice, and told the people nothing of his other purpose. After he had made sure that Jesse and his sons were in the assembly, he sanctified or blessed them all and sent them away to bathe and wash their clothes and fast,[1] telling them to come again in the early morning.

In the early morning, while it was still and cool, the men gathered together again around a rude stone altar. Samuel divided the meat of a young heifer from the fat. The meat he gave to the people to roast for themselves, the fat he burned upon the altar. As the smoke of its burning ascended into the clear morning sky they felt that it made a sweet and acceptable odor to God because it carried their love and worship.

Then Samuel called Jesse and said, "I must this day choose a king for Israel. He must be one who is brave, obedient and wise, that he may lead the people aright. You have many sons. One among them must be king. Let them now pass before me that I may make my choice."

Then Jesse sent forth his eldest son, Eliab, a tall, handsome fellow who carried himself proudly. Samuel loved handsome men and thought to himself, "Surely this is a fit man to be king." Then he remembered about

[1] **Bathe, wash their clothes, and fast.** This was the first part of the process of purifying without which no man was allowed to take part in religious services. Only the men took part in such services.

Saul. Saul had been just such a handsome fellow. "It is not enough that a man shall be good to look upon," said Samuel. "The Lord seeth not as man seeth. Man looketh upon the outward appearance but God looketh upon the heart. This man cannot be king."

Then Jesse called Abinadab. But Samuel said, "Neither hath the Lord chosen this." Eliab and Abinadab turned away very sadly.

"Have you not other sons?" said Samuel.

"Here are five more," answered Jesse.

"Cause them to pass before me." So one by one they passed before Samuel. As they passed he gave each one a long, searching gaze but shook his head slowly. Surely, he thought, God has directed me aright. Among Jesse's sons there must be one fit to be king. Yet none of these was fit. In perplexity Samuel turned to Jesse and said, "Are these all thy children?"

"There is yet one more," answered Jesse, "but he is young and tends the sheep."

"Send and fetch him, for we will not sit until he comes."

Then Jesse sent a swift runner to the fields, saying, "Run! Fetch hither my son who tendeth the flocks. Tarry not, but return quickly."

Out by the river David was caring for his sheep. The morning sun shone warm and bright. The grass was thick and sweet. The birds were singing. It was just such a morning as stood out clearest in David's memory when he was an old man and wrote those beautiful words, "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He leadeth me beside the still waters."

Suddenly the runner sank at his feet, panting with exhaustion.

"Thou art wanted, young master. Thy father sends for thee to come quickly to the high place."

"Whither, I pray thee? And how shall I leave my sheep?"

"At the altar, where the seer offereth sacrifice. Go! I will tend the flocks."

So, wondering, yet obedient, David sped down the valley. Though he was young, he was almost a man, a very tall, strong, handsome youth with fair hair and ruddy skin.

Soon he came within sight of the altar and saw all his kindred and Samuel waiting there. He stopped, wondering.

But Samuel came to meet him with outstretched hands and words of welcome. He knew now that this was the chosen one of God.

"Kneel, David," he cried. And when David had sunk upon his knees, Samuel, lifting his horn of sacred oil, allowed it to run down over David's head and said,

"Before Jehovah, in the midst of thy brethren, I anoint thee to be king over Israel. Arise! Go ye forth and await the anointing of the people. God shall be with thee." [2]

Related Work. Locate Bethlehem on a map.
This story may be easily dramatized.

DAVID A HERO

One day, when David was about twenty, a mere boy as they thought at that time, he was in the hills on guard over the sheep. It was almost evening. Close to the rocks and caves the shadows hung heavy and dark. David was just thinking, "I will drive the flocks to the

[2] **The anointing of the people.** As in the case of Saul, the people, also, must acclaim and publicly crown him king. Such action came usually after some great military victory.

folds. It is nearly night," when he noticed something queer going on among them. They were huddling close together and one or two were bleating in a frightened way. The dogs, too, big red, shaggy fellows, more like wolves than dogs and named Nadir and Nob, were acting very strangely, running forward barking furiously, then back again almost whimpering.

David knew that some great danger threatened his sheep. He was all alone. It was growing dark. He had no arrows, but he did have his sling and some sharp stones. His heavy cudgel also swung under his arm. He peered long and carefully among the rocks and at last he saw the thing the sheep feared and the dogs were defying. A great, tawny lion, crouching among the rocks and shadows, was edging his way along in absolute silence, intent only on getting a fine fat sheep for his supper. David fitted a stone in his sling and advanced slowly. When he was near enough he let fly, and the stone struck the lion fairly in the head and set him roaring with pain and surprise. But he did not run away. He was after his supper and stood his ground, snarling and showing his yellow fangs. So he crouched flat on the ground and switched his tail and waited. Nadir and Nob only teased him with their barks and nips. The sheep huddled closer, thoroughly frightened. One little lamb ran outside crying piteously after his mother. Quick as lightning the lion leaped and, seizing this little trembling creature in his cruel, sharp teeth, turned and ran back towards the cave.

Then David ran so swiftly after the lion that at the mouth of the cave he overtook him and without stopping to think, so full of pity was he for the poor lamb, so hot with anger at the lion, he brought down his heavy wooden cudgel again and again over his head. The lion dropped the lamb, all bleeding and torn, and turned on David. They fought there in the twilight at the mouth

of the cave, a sharp, hard fight. In the end the lion lay dead, for David had thrust his cudgel straight down his great throat and with his bare hands had choked him to death. Then, all bleeding and exhausted though he was, David drove the bewildered sheep home. He had shown some kingly qualities—faithfulness, courage, pity for the helpless, skill and daring. They made a hero of him at home. His father said to him very proudly, "Now, son, since you have been so brave I am going to send you down to the king's camp where you can see some real soldiers. You can take some loaves of bread to your brothers and a gift for their captain. Keep your eyes open and learn all you can, for you will be a soldier some day yourself."

The grain and loaves and cheeses were packed in a cart. David himself walked, wearing his shepherd's coat and carrying his staff and sling. But he carried something just his own. It was a little harp, a simple musical instrument on which he played. It made a pretty, tinkling sound, and David was very skillful with it. He played as he marched along, he was so happy to go. He may even see a real battle—be in it, for all he knows. "Are not those the Philistines camped on those hills beyond? Are not those Israel's tents in the valley? Surely the hosts are going forth to battle." David was so overjoyed that he shouted out some old battle cry: "Let the living God fight for Israel!" or "On! On! In Jehovah's name!" He was so excited that he left his gifts in the care of a keeper and ran right on ahead to join the army. The arrows were falling around him. The men were fighting with swords and lances. Some were dead, some only groaning with wounds. But David ran on and on. Presently he saw a wonderful sight. A lull fell upon the battle and in the silence a great figure appeared upon the hill opposite; a terrible looking giant with great, hairy head and hands like

sledge hammers. Everybody seemed terribly afraid as this bold fellow stood and bawled a challenge:

"Why do you make your armies fight? I am a Philistine. Ye are servants of Saul. Choose now a man to fight with me. If he kill me, we will be your servants. But if I kill him, then ye shall be our servants. I defy you and all your armies. Give me a man that we may fight together."

But nobody volunteered. Instead the Israelites gathered together in little groups and talked. David was not frightened and begged his brothers to tell him all about it.

But Eliab, his eldest brother, who was perhaps a little jealous of David, answered angrily, "What did you come down here for? Where did you leave your few sheep? I know how curious you are and how thoughtless. You came just to see the battle."

But David was too much interested to be ruffled by Eliab. He kept on asking everybody he met to explain to him exactly what it all meant until someone ran and told the king about his eagerness. Then Saul sent for David. David was so excited that he cried out to Saul,

"Do not be afraid of this great boaster. I will go and fight him."

And Saul said, "You? Why, you are only a youth. You are not able to fight this man of war."

But David forgot himself and boasted and said,

"Why, I slew a lion with my bare hands. He took a little helpless lamb out of my flock and I had a hand-to-hand fight with him. I hit him over the head with my cudgel and when he dropped the lamb and turned on me I caught him by his beard and killed him. I have killed bears, too, and I will kill this Philistine just as I did them since he dares to defy the armies of the living God. Moreover," he added more soberly, "God, who helped me slay the lion, will surely help me slay this Philistine."

These last words won Saul over and he gave his reluctant consent. David was not trusting in himself alone. If he put his trust in God, then surely he had a chance to win. So Saul said,

"Go then, and God be with thee. But first put on this armor. Here is my own helmet and breast plate. Put them on. And here is my sword."

David put them all on and picked up the great sword. But the armor was so heavy that he could hardly set one foot before the other, and the sword was too long for a man of his stature. He made a ridiculous figure. So he laughed and said, "I can't wear these things for I never tried them before. But I have a trusty weapon which I understand. Just watch me."

So he took off the armor and took his shepherd's staff. Then he selected five smooth stones from the brook, put them in his bag, took his sling in his hands and went out to face the Philistine.

It was really a very odd sight and I imagine many of the men looking on laughed. Here was this fearful giant, all dressed in a suit of brass, with an armor bearer to walk in front and cover him with a shield, and with an enormous sword in his hand; and here was David, hardly more than a boy, with only a staff and a sling, with head and legs unprotected. Very appealing he looked, no doubt, with his clear skin and red hair and bold, high look of courage, but pitifully young and slender and weak compared with the giant. There was not a sound heard in all the listening armies until the giant Goliath roared out in anger,

"Do you take me for a dog that you give battle to me with a staff? Come on, then, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the beasts of the fields."

But David answered clearly and bravely, "Thou comest against me with a sword and shield and spear;

but I come against thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into my hand, and I will smite thee and take thy head from thee, and I will give the carcasses of the hosts of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air that all the world may know that there is a God in Israel."

Then they rushed toward each other. But David was calm and brave. He fitted a stone into his sling. He swung it swiftly round and round. He released the shorter string, and swift and true as an arrow, with almost the force and speed of a bullet, before Goliath could draw his heavy sword, the stone hit him in the forehead, and with a great groan he fell forward upon the earth stunned. David lunged forward, running with all his speed, sprang upon the fallen giant, drew out Goliath's own sword and thrust it deep into the giant's heart. Then there was the wildest confusion. In terror the Philistines turned to flee, but they were overtaken by the triumphant Israelites, who killed or took captive great numbers and drove the rest away out of the country. David stuck the head of Goliath on the point of his sword and went parading up and down, so proud and happy that he could not keep still.

When Saul heard of David's success, he sent for him and took him into his household and made him a member of his own family.

Related Work. Make a sling like that used by David. Take a piece of leather somewhat oval in shape, five or six inches long and two and one-half inches wide at the widest part. Attach to each end a strong cord about two feet long. The sling was used by placing a stone in the leather part, grasping the cords firmly, swinging the stone about rapidly to give it force, and, at the right moment, letting go of one of the cords which would release the stone. Much practice is required to develop skill in the use of this form of sling.

Make the shield, sword, and spear of Goliath.

A ROYAL FRIENDSHIP

A Play in Five Acts

Act I

Scene I

Meeting of Jonathan and David in the King's house.

Characters:

Abner, the commander-in-chief of all the army.
David, son of Jesse
Jonathan, Saul's son and heir to the throne.
Saul, the king.
Court attendants.

[*David is still parading up and down with the head of Goliath on the point of his sword. The women are singing his praises. All the people are rejoicing. Saul and Abner are talking together very earnestly in the palace.*]

Saul: It was a wonderful deed. Listen to the people cheer! Abner, whose son is this lad?

Abner: I do not know, my lord.

Saul: Find out then and come and tell me.

Abner: I will go fetch him to thee, my lord.

[*Abner goes out but returns at once with David still carrying Goliath's head.*]

Saul: Whose son are you, my lad?

David: I am the son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite.

Saul: You are a brave man and have this day done

such a wonderful deed that never, in all the history of Israel shall your name be forgotten.

DAVID: I used only the simple weapons of a shepherd, my lord.

SAUL: God strengthened thy arm and made sure thy aim. I owe thee honor in the name of Israel. Sit, and my servant shall bring forth food and wine.

DAVID: Let us then dispose of this boaster. How will he look here?

[*He places the head of* GOLIATH *on a pedestal.*]

ABNER: He becomes it better than he did his sturdy legs. We are well rid of this Philistine terror.

SAUL: My son Jonathan, who will be king after me, awaits. He hath heard of thy wondrous courage.

DAVID: I am eager to meet him. Mine eyes have never yet seen a king's son.

[*Enter* JONATHAN. *He is dressed in a military uniform, with a cloak and a coat and a beautiful sword thrust in his girdle. He is even younger than* DAVID *and so excited over* DAVID'S *bravery that he is almost ready to fall down and worship him. As he enters* DAVID *stands up and they clasp hands as Jonathan rushes over to him.*]

JONATHAN: I saw you do it! You stood boldly while that fearful giant came nearer and nearer! My heart came up in my throat and stood there choking me. But my eyes saw your stone strike true. The great giant was laughing in scorn of us all, but it was his last laugh. He fell like a log.

DAVID: I swung for God and for Israel. I could not fail.

JONATHAN: Your arm is strong like a bull's neck. Your heart is brave like a lion guarding her whelps. Your face is beautiful as the morning. Take my cloak and coat! My sword also! I am not as worthy of them as you are. My heart goes out to you.

DAVID: And mine to you! You are a prince in truth. Shall we be friends?

[*They clasp hands.*]

JONATHAN: Friends indeed! I am not worthy. Yet if you will take me as your friend I will be your true friend as long as I live.

DAVID: And I will be your friend.

[*Saul approaches and lays his hand over their clasped hands.*]

SAUL: We all love you so, David, that we cannot let you go. You shall stay with us and be a member of our household. I will make you captain of a thousand men. When I am sad and gloomy, as I often am, you shall play me sweet music and so drive away the evil spirit of gloom.

DAVID: I am not worthy. I did but swing my simple sling as I had done a thousand times before. Yet, if it so please the king, I will dwell in his house and be his servant.

ACT II

Scene I

[SAUL, ABNER *and* JONATHAN *are in a room. Saul is seated.* ABNER *stands near a window.* JONATHAN *sits to the right and a little back of his father. Outside can be heard women's voices singing and the sounds of cymbals and tambourines. The women sing,*

"Saul has slain his thousands,
But David his ten-thousands."]

SAUL: Who is singing?

ABNER [*looking out of the window*]: The women, my lord. They dance and sing.

SAUL: Do they say that David has slain his ten thousands and I have slain but thousands? It is false. This

David seeks to find so much favor with the people, that he will be able to usurp my throne.

JONATHAN [*starting forward*]: No! No, father! David is true. He is as true as truth.

SAUL [*gently*]: Thou art a foolish lad. This David would take away thine inheritance and be king in thy place when I am gone.

JONATHAN: Oh, not so! I am sure thou art wrong.

SAUL: Be silent. Thou art no more than an ignorant child. Abner!

ABNER: Yes, my lord.

SAUL: What say the soldiers who fight under this upstart, David?

ABNER: They fight twice as long and bravely when he commands.

SAUL [*starting up and pacing up and down*]: I fear him! I fear him!

[*Then turning fiercely to* JONATHAN *and* ABNER *he calls out in a loud, harsh voice*]: Go ye both forth and kill this would-be king. Strike him down as ye would a dog. Go! The king protects thee.

JONATHAN [*coming forward and speaking soothingly*]: No! No, my father! Do not sin against this innocent man. He has done thee no wrong, but hath served thee most loyally. He took his life in his hands to protect us against the Philistines. God was with him. I pray you, dear father, take not this sin upon thy soul, to slay an innocent and loyal man.

[*Saul turns away and walks up and down in indecision. Then he stops before* JONATHAN and takes his hand *in his.*]

SAUL: Thou art right, my good, generous Jonathan. As Jehovah lives, he shall not be put to death. I swear it by the God of Israel!

(CURTAIN)

Scene II

[JONATHAN *and* DAVID *are in the fields. They clasp hands and then sit down to talk.*]

JONATHAN: My father overheard the singing women and he was very angry.

DAVID: Angry with me? Why?

JONATHAN: I know not why unless an evil spirit possess him. I love and trust thee.

DAVID [*indignantly*]: I have served and honored the king. I have slain his enemies. I have left my own home and given my life all to him. [*Rising and walking away proudly*]: I will go no more to his table.

JONATHAN [*rising and walking beside David, and speaking coaxingly*]: Nay, nay! Thou hast won the hearts of the people. My father hath given me his sacred oath by Jehovah that he will do thee no harm. Come now to dine with the king.

DAVID [*being reluctantly drawn along*]: But if in an evil moment he should do me violence?

JONATHAN: Bring thy harp and play soothing airs upon it. I will answer to thee with my life. He shall do thee no harm.

[DAVID *and* JONATHAN *enter the banquet hall. Saul is seated behind the table. A great spear rests beside him. He looks very gloomy and sad. Jonathan walks forward.*]

JONATHAN: My father, the king, our David hath returned.

SAUL: I see he bringeth his harp. My spirit is vexed. Let him make soothing music.

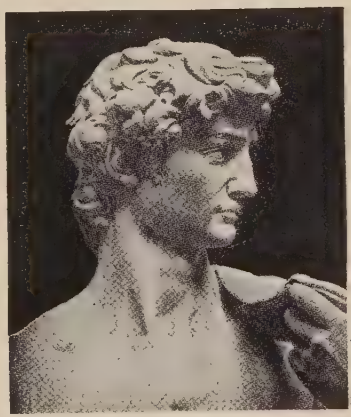
[DAVID *places his harp on the floor and begins to play. Saul leans forward and looks at him fixedly, then reaches out and grasps his spear. Suddenly, while David seems absorbed in his playing, he aims and*

Schopin

David Playing Before Saul

Reynolds

Infant Samuel



Michelangelo

David

By Courtesy of Perry Pictures Co., Malden, Mass.

hurls the spear. David, however, has not been so absorbed in his music but that he has kept watch on Saul. For as Saul hurls the spear, David drops forward and the spear strikes the wall above his head. David makes his escape through a side door.]

Act III

Scene I

[David *and* Jonathan *in the king's house.*]

David: What have I done to arouse the king's wrath against me? What is my guilt? I have been loyal. I have served Israel with all my heart. Why should he wish to put me to death?

Jonathan: I know not. But you shall not die. I swear it. My father tells me all his secrets. He does nothing without first talking it over with me. Why should he hide from me his purposes concerning you?

David: Your father knows that you love me. He will not tell you what he means to do to me for fear of hurting your feelings. But just as surely as God lives there is but a step between me and death.

[Jonathan *comes forward and throws his arms around* David.]

Jonathan: What do you want me to do for you? I will do anything you ask me.

David: Come, sit down and I will tell you.

[*They sit on stools close together.*]

To-morrow is the time of the new moon and I am expected to sit at the table with the king. But give me your permission to go and hide in the fields until evening. If your father misses me, say, "David begged permission to go to Bethlehem to the yearly sacrifice of his clan." If he

says, "Good!" then all is well with me. But if he becomes angry, then we shall know that he is planning evil against me. Be good to me, my friend. My life is in thy hands. Have we not made a covenant together? If I must be put out of the way for the good of Israel, kill me yourself. Why betray me to an enemy?

JONATHAN: I pray that death be far from you. I will surely tell you if the king plot evil against you.

DAVID: Who will tell me if the king answers you harshly?

JONATHAN [*rising and looking all around*]: Come, let us go out into the fields. Here we may be overheard and betrayed.

[*They walk out into the fields, talking confidentially as they go.*]

JONATHAN: I will talk with my father and find out his intentions towards you. It may cost me my life, but have I not sworn friendship towards you? If I am yet alive, let us remain friends. Be kind to me. But if I die, be kind to my kindred, my brothers and children. If prosperity comes to you and you forget me, may God remind you of me!

DAVID: Beyond question or shadow of doubt, I am a true friend to you and your house forever.

[*They clasp hands and look earnestly in each other's eyes in silence for a long time.*]

JONATHAN: Come, then. I have all faith in you. Let us plan. To-morrow is the full moon. If your place is empty at the table, you will be greatly missed and my father will ask about you. But you must come to this place and hide behind this pile of stone. On the third day I will shoot arrows in this field as though I shot at a mark. I will send a lad, saying, "Go find them!" If I say to the lad, "See! the arrows are on this side of you. Pick them up!" come, for it is well with you. But if I say to the boy, "The arrows are beyond you," then go,

for Jehovah sends you away. Let God watch between you and me forever.

Scene II

Place: At the king's table.
Characters: The KING; JONATHAN; ABNER.

SAUL: Why has not the son of Jesse come to his meals either yesterday or to-day?

JONATHAN: David begged permission of me to go to the annual sacrifice of his clan at Bethlehem and I did not refuse him. Hence he has not come to the king's table.

SAUL [*very angrily*]: Thou son of depravity! Do I not know that you are friends with the son of Jesse to your own shame? As long as he lives on the earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Now send and bring him to me for he is doomed to die.

JONATHAN: Oh my father, why should he be put to death? What has he done?

[SAUL *lifts up his spear as though to strike his own son and* JONATHAN *rises in wrath and leaves the table.*]

Scene III

Place: In the fields.
Characters: JONATHAN and a lad.

JONATHAN: Run now! Find me the arrows which I shoot.

[*The lad runs after the arrows.*]

JONATHAN: Is not the arrow beyond thee? Hurry! Quick! Do not stop. Go carry them to the city. I will shoot no more to-day.

[*As soon as the lad is gone* DAVID *rises from his hiding place and falls on his face to the ground three times. They kiss each other and weep.*]

JONATHAN: Go now in peace. As for us, have we not sworn to each other? God watch between my sons and descendants and your sons and descendants forever.

[*They separate and go off in different directions.*]

ACT IV

The Death of Jonathan

Scene I

Place: A camp.
Characters: DAVID; soldiers; several young men, followers of DAVID; a runner.

[*David is standing in an open space a little to one side of the other soldiers. He is in military costume,—a short, full tunic, with a sword in his girdle. A young man comes running towards him. He wears the short tunic and sandals of a camp runner, but his clothing is torn and there is earth upon his head. He falls upon his knees before* DAVID *and bows his head to the ground. All the men look on eagerly and listen intently.*]

DAVID: Whence do you come?

RUNNER: From the camp of Israel have I escaped.

DAVID [*eagerly*]: How went the affair? Tell me!

RUNNER: The people fled from the battle and many of the people perished; and also Saul and Jonathan, his son, are dead.

[*Exclamations of surprise and pity.*]

DAVID [*leaning forward eagerly*]: How do you know that Saul and Jonathan are dead?

RUNNER: I happened to be on Mount Gilboa just as Saul was leaning on his spear, at the time the chariots and horsemen were following closely in pursuit of him, and when he had looked behind him he saw me and called to me. And I answered, "Here am I." And he said to me, "Who are you?" And I answered, "I am an Amalekite." And he said to me, "Stand, I pray, before me and slay me, for dizziness hath overcome me because my life is yet whole in me." So I stood before him and slew him because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that was upon his head and the armlet that was upon his arm and have brought them here unto my lord.

[*He gives them to* DAVID. *Then* DAVID *and all the soldiers who were with him tear their clothing and throw earth upon their heads and weep and fast until the sun goes down.*]

Scene II

Time: Evening in the camp.
Characters: Same as in Scene I.

DAVID: Where do you come from?

RUNNER: I am the son of an Amalekite who lives here in this country.

DAVID: How is it that you were not afraid to put forth your hand against Jehovah's anointed?

RUNNER: I did but do as he commanded.

DAVID: Your blood be upon your own head, for your mouth testifies against you when you said, "I have slain Jehovah's anointed."

[*David turns to one of his own soldiers.*]

DAVID: Approach and strike him down.

[*Soldier, saluting, comes forward, draws his sword and strikes the runner dead.*]

DAVID [*reciting*]:
Weep O Judah!
Grieve O Israel!
On thy heights are the slain!
How hath the mighty fallen!

Tell it not in Gath,
Declare it not in the streets of Askelon;
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised exult.
Ye mountains of Gilboa, may no dew descend,
Nor rain upon you, oh you fields of death!
For there was the shield of the mighty cast away,
The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.

From the blood of the slain,
From the fat of the mighty,
The bow of Jonathan turned not back,
The sword of Saul returned not empty.

Saul and Jonathan, the beloved and the lovely!
In life and in death, they were not parted;
They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.
Daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
Who clothed you daintily in fine linen,
Who put golden ornaments on your garments,
(and say)
"How hath the mighty fallen in the midst of battle!

Jonathan, in thy death thou hast wounded me!
I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan!
Thou wert surpassingly dear to me,
Thy love to me was far more than the love of woman!

How hath the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished!

Act V

David is true to Jonathan.

Scene I

Place: Home of Jonathan in Jazreel.
Characters: A woman, the nurse; Meribaal, a boy of five; a messenger; soldiers.

[*The scene is in a garden. The nurse is weaving at a little loom. She hums an old tune softly. The child is playing in the sand. A bugle call is heard in the distance and a group of soldiers march past. As they come near they stop and one advances towards the old woman. He salutes. The woman drops her work and rises, trembling.*]

Messenger: I bring tidings.

Nurse: Not evil tidings, I pray. Speak quickly.

Messenger: The king is slain in battle.

[*The nurse stoops and lifts the child.*]

Nurse: The king? The king is dead?

Messenger: And Jonathan, his son, dead too, fallen in battle. And all the hosts of Israel, driven like chaff before the wind.

[*The old woman clasps the child in her arms and turns to flee.*]

Nurse: Flee ye! Flee ye to the hills. The Philistines are upon us. I will save the king's son while there is yet time.

[*Holding the child in her arms, she starts to run; but he is heavy and she stumbles and falls on him as he drops to the ground. She examines him, and finds he is*

seriously hurt and cannot rise. The soldier lifts him gently and they carry him into the house.]

Scene II

Place: David's house in Hebron.
Characters: DAVID; JOAB; servant.

DAVID: Is there no one left of Saul's house to whom I may show kindness for Jonathan's sake? My heart was bound up with his. We swore eternal friendship. I would fulfil my vow.

JOAB: There is yet one son of Jonathan. He dwells in the hills with a servant, Ziba.

DAVID: Send now and have this Ziba brought before me.

JOAB [*to servant*]: Run, fetch hither the servant of Jonathan.

[*Enter* ZIBA; *kneels.*]

DAVID: Are you Ziba?

ZIBA: I am your servant, Ziba.

[*She rises.*]

DAVID: Is there no one belonging to Jonathan to whom I may show kindness according to my vow?

ZIBA: Jonathan hath still a son, but he is a cripple.

DAVID: Poor lad! How came he to be a cripple?

ZIBA: When the news came of the king's death, my lord, all the people were much frightened. The child's nurse took him up to escape with him, but he fell from her arms and was so injured that he is lame.

DAVID: What is his name?

ZIBA: His name is Meribaal.

DAVID: Send to his home and bring him before me.

Scene III

Place: David's house.
Characters: DAVID; ZIBA; MERIBAAL; servants.

DAVID: Meribaal!

MERIBAAL [*falling on his face to the floor*]: Behold your servant.

[*Remains kneeling.*]

DAVID: Fear not, Meribaal. I loved your father and I will love you. You shall have all the land that belonged to Saul. You shall have servants to care for you and you shall eat at my table as one of my own children. I am the king.

MERIBAAL [*bowing down to the floor*]: What am I that you should look favorably upon such a dead dog?

DAVID: You are the son of my friend Jonathan. So do I keep faith with the dead.

[*Servants assist* MERIBAAL *to rise.*]

DAVID [*turning and calling*]: Ziba!

ZIBA [*bowing*]: My lord calleth?

DAVID: All that belongs to Saul and all his house have I given to his son. You shall cultivate the land for him together with your sons and servants and bring in the fruits, that your master's son may have food to eat. But Meribaal shall always eat bread at my table.

ZIBA: Your command shall be my law. I have fifteen sons and twenty servants and we shall be glad to serve you.

MERIBAAL: You are a loving and loyal friend. I thank you in the name of my father.

THE OUTLAW BECOMES KING

Rap, rap, rap! Thump, thump! Bang, bang! Some one was at the door, some determined fellow who would not go until answered.

The old priest of Nob, Ahimelech, lifted his head to listen.

"Who's there?" he called.

"Open, in the name of Jehovah. 'Tis one who needs thy help."

Hobbling slowly and painfully, the old priest undid the heavy bolts and set the door ajar. As he did so, a weary, mud-stained traveler, haggard and unshaven, staggered in.

"Who are you?" said the old man in alarm.

"Peace, be not afraid. Of all the men on earth I am the least able to do you harm. Have you food?"

"Yes, holy food, bread and flesh, the priest's portion from the morning sacrifices. It is not for such as you."

"Who think you then that I am? I am the king's messenger, David, he who struck Goliath with a smooth stone and then slew him with his own sword."

"David!" faltered the old priest. "Not that David who dwells in the king's house, whom the king's son calls friend?"

"The very same, old man. I am on the king's business. I am far spent. Fetch food and that same sword which I wrested from the giant. I am unarmed."

So the old priest brought food and clean clothing to him who journeyed, not on the king's business as he said, but as a fugitive from the jealous wrath of that same king. But this he dared not tell.

Having eaten and rested and thrust the great sword in his girdle, he said,

"Is there here a trusty messenger, one who can travel swiftly and silently?"

And the old man, thinking he served his king, said:

"There is none but Sela. Yet he is faithful like a dog to his master, and he is silent."

"Let him come."

When Sela entered, he said, "Do you know of Bethel and of Jesse and his seven sons?"

"Yes, master."

Then David, lifting the great sword, pierced the skin of his finger and when the bright blood burst forth he let it fall upon a napkin.

"Take this," he said. "Give it to my father and my father's sons. It is the call of blood to blood.[1] They will understand. Say you but the one word, 'Adullam'."

"I go, master," said the slave, " in the king's name."

"In the king's name," answered David.

Far up in the mountains of Judah, where the great cliffs break into chasms and the dark caves stretch back into their depths; where the rivers find their sources in springs and clear, cold lakes and go rushing downward toward the plains; where the mountain lions and cave bears dwell, to his stronghold of Adullam, David made his escape. Here his clan joined him and here came also his brothers with their clans and his father's clan, too, in all about four hundred men. These rallied around the outlaw, David, answering the call of blood to blood, swearing allegiance to David and enmity to his enemies.

When evening came they gathered about their camp fires and ate their food, which was often stolen from the peaceful farms of the plains below; then crept into their dark caves, barricaded by rocks or defended by fire from prowling beasts of prey, and slept.

In the king's house there was mounting and arming of many men and wild searching for the missing David. Jonathan's heart was heavy and sad and he took no part in the continued searching. But Saul was fierce and determined. He sent out many expeditions to capture David. He even joined one of them himself.

[1] **The call of blood to blood, or the clan call.** Each member of a clan was bound by the most sacred oaths to defend with his life every other member of his clan. Not only was he pledged to defend his brother, but he was pledged to take revenge. A life for a life was considered justice. So David sought the help of his own people.

One night, as Saul lay sleeping in his camp, David, watching from the mountain's height, saw him and when it was night crept quietly, with two companions, through the sleeping soldiers, and cut off a part of the skirt of Saul's robe. Gaining again the far side of the chasm, David called and said,

"My lord, the king!"

And when Saul looked, he said, bowing down to the ground,

"You have heard that I seek your life to take your throne from your son. That is not true. See! I hold a part of the skirt of your robe. Had I wished to kill you I would have done so as I stooped above you. I have no hatred or envy in my heart towards you. Why do you hunt me like a dog that you may kill me? God may avenge me against you, but I shall never seek your life."

For a moment, as Saul listened to this generous speech, all his old love for David came back. The tears came to his eyes and he said,

"Is this thy voice, my son David? You are better than I, for you have returned good for evil. May God reward you! Now I know you will be the king. But swear to me that you will be fair and kind to my children and remember me that I be not forgotten in my father's house."

And David swore unto Saul and Saul gave up trying to capture and kill him. But in spite of the king's tears and confession, David retired again into his stronghold in the mountains.

Soon afterwards both Saul and Jonathan were slain in battle and David grieved over them and spoke a beautiful lament for them.[2]

Only one life now stood between him and Israel's

[2] **David's lament for Saul.** See page 246 in *A Royal Friendship.*

throne, that of Ishbaal, Jonathan's eldest son. Soon Ishbaal was slain by men who sought by this act to find favor with David. One day while Ishbaal was taking a noontime nap and the keeper of the door was busy threshing wheat,[3] two men came creeping, creeping softly up to him and killed him and cut off his head. His poor, bleeding head they took to David, hoping to be rewarded; but David repulsed them and had them put to death instead.

Now came the happy time when all the men of Israel from all the twelve tribes came to Hebron and crowned David king over all. Gone are the times of hiding in dark caves and mountain forests! Poor, gloomy, changing Saul is dead. Quiet in death, too, is the faithful, loving heart of Jonathan. Only David lives, he whom the people love for his beauty, his courage, his generous heart, and his ability as a leader.

"Let David be king over us! Let David be king!" they shout again and again.

And so they placed a golden crown upon his head and threw a kingly robe over his shoulders and bowed low before him.

There was music, the steady throb, throb of drums; there were dancing and feasting. Over great beds of coals hung huge oxen and sheep roasting for the feast, while slaves passed continually in and out with great platters piled high with bread and fruit or with skins of wine. For many, many days this celebration went on in order to make it plain to the people that for the first

[3] **Threshing wheat.** Wheat was threshed by means of the flail, a stick with a broad, whip-like end, wielded by hand, or it was trodden out by cattle. The ripened grain was laid on the threshing floor, an area of smooth, hard earth, and a yoke of oxen was driven round and round on it. The grain, so separated from the straw, was then allowed to fall from shallow baskets held aloft that the wind might carry away the chaff.

time in their history one king ruled over one united nation.[4] And they shouted over and over,

"Long live our king! Long live our royal king, David!"

THE OLD CITY OF PEACE

About midway between the northern and southern parts of the kingdom over which David was called to rule, there stood a beautiful old city called Salem. It was a city when Abraham left his home in Ur. It was called then, and is still known as The City of Peace. We call it to-day, Jerusalem.

It was a great natural fortress, so inaccessible that the Jebusites who dwelt there boasted that the lame and the blind could defend their city against all its enemies.

King David, from his stronghold of Adullam looked down upon Jerusalem, set so proudly upon her lofty heights, and determined to make her his capital city. In order to do this, however, he must first conquer the Philistines who ruled all that part of the country.

The Philistines had scorned to notice David while he was the chief of but two small tribes; but now that he was king over all Israel and could command thousands of fighting men, they made up their minds that so dangerous a neighbor must be defeated and humbled. So they gathered together all their armies and encamped in the valleys and plains between the stronghold of Adullam and the city of Jerusalem. Many times had the Israelites fought with the Philistines, sometimes with the victory on their side, sometimes with defeat. Now had come the real life-and-death struggle. Now must

[4] **One nation.** The Hebrew nation.

Jehovah be enthroned in Jerusalem or the gods of the Philistines be worshipped there forever.

From far up on his mountain heights, David watched the Philistines gathering their forces for this bitter contest. Then he prayed to Jehovah and said,

"Shall I go against the Philistines? Will you deliver them into my hands?"

And the Lord said to David, "Go now, for I will deliver them into your hands."

And David, with his loyal general, Joab, and his men fought bravely and won such a victory that from that time on the Israelites were the undisputed rulers of the land.[1]

While King David commanded his forces amid the din and turmoil of battle, a little band of Israelites crept through an abandoned aqueduct into the city of Jerusalem. Very quietly they stole along in the deep darkness. First they get within the city! Then they fall upon the keepers of the gates to throttle and blind them! Finally, the great keys turn in the locks; the bolts are withdrawn; the mighty gates swing on their hinges and King David, riding proudly at the head of his victorious army marches in! Under a well-loved king the Israelites at last obtain possession of the Promised Land. I wish that Moses might have risen from his lonely mountain grave to ride beside King David; to hear the shouts of his happy people and know that they are safe in the home God had prepared for them!

I am glad that David the conqueror did not destroy the old city nor kill nor enslave its inhabitants, but rather chose to build his palace in a new part on a slope overlooking the sea to the west. For this palace his friend, Hiram of Tyre, sent much costly material, cedars from Lebanon, gold and silver from his deep mines, rich fab-

[1] **Establishment of a dynasty.** For four centuries David's descendants sat upon the throne of the Hebrews.

rics from his busy looms, and skilled artisans to do the fine work of building.[2]

King David longed to build a splendid temple to Jehovah, but he was not permitted to do it. He did, however, collect all the building materials for such a temple and his son, Solomon, who reigned after him, built it instead.

Many, many long, happy years David reigned in Jerusalem and when at last he lay dying, he appointed his son to reign in his place over a united Israel, rich and strong.

Following are three of the beautiful psalms or poems that David is said to have written:

Psalm 1

Blessed is the man who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But has delight in the law of the Lord: and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: his leaf also shall not wither and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

[2] **David's palace.** For the first time in their history the Hebrews sought abroad for building material and labor. Hiram, king of Tyre, a city to the north of Palestine, sent ships into Jerusalem's port, Jaffa, containing lumber and other materials as well as skilled laborers to work on the king's palace. The Israelites had been so occupied in fighting, and so many of their men had been trained only as soldiers, that they no longer had skilled artisans as in the days of Bezaleel. This purchase of building material from another kingdom marked the beginning of their foreign commerce, a form of business in which they became particularly successful.

For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil: for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies: thou anointest my head with oil: my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Psalm 100

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness, come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord he is good: it is he that hath made us and not we ourselves; for we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise; be thankful unto him and bless his name.

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting and his truth endureth to all generations.

Related Work. Locate on a map Jerusalem and Adullam. Locate also Tyre, and Jaffa.

SOLOMON THE WISE KING

DAVID, the great warrior king, died in his palace at Jerusalem and Solomon, his son, was crowned king in his place.

God would not let David build His temple in Jerusalem because David had been a man of war, had fought in many battles and killed many people; but Solomon, who was young, wise, rich, and very reverent towards God, was allowed to build the temple.

Very soon after he was made king, while there was yet no great temple where all the people might worship, Solomon went to Gibeon to sacrifice. There was in Gibeon what might be called a *high place,* that is, an out-of-doors altar where God was worshipped.

One night at Gibeon, while Solomon slept he dreamed of God. In his dream he heard God say,

"Ask what I shall give thee."

And Solomon said, "O God, I am king over all the people, but I am as a little child. I know not how to go out or come in. I pray an understanding heart that I may know what is good and what is bad and judge my people wisely."

And God said,

"Because you have not asked selfishly for long life or riches or power over your enemies, but have asked for wisdom and understanding, behold I give you such a wise, understanding heart that there will be none other like you."

Then Solomon woke and knew that he had been dreaming. But his dream made him very happy and he went back home to Jerusalem and stood before the Ark of the Covenant and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings and made a great feast for the people. His

dream, too, came true, for he was wiser than all other men; and his fame was in all nations round about. And he spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spoke of trees from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; he spoke also of beasts and of fowl and of creeping things and of fishes. And there came people to hear the wisdom of Solomon from all the kings of the earth.

Now Solomon remembered how much his father, David, had wished to have a temple in Jerusalem, so he set himself diligently to work to build the temple. David had planned the temple after the pattern of the Tabernacle which Moses had built in the wilderness. So Solomon used these plans, only he made the new temple twice as large as the older temple and finer in every way. He wrote to his friend, Hiram in Tyre, and asked him to send him timber from the great cedar and fir trees of Lebanon. He sent out messengers through far countries to search for gold and silver and jewels and all manner of precious things. These he used to adorn the temple. He sent ships out over the sea to search for treasures.

All this helped Solomon and his people to realize that they lived in a great, wide, rich world full of different kinds of people, all of whom had something worth while to exchange with the others. The Israelites had up to this time lived within themselves, thinking only of themselves and how they could best produce all they needed among themselves. Now they began to realize that there were other peoples who were as wise and rich and brave as they. By the time Solomon's temple stood finished in Jerusalem, a beautiful, shining, golden "House of God," where they all might worship together, they had become through their business dealings with the rest of the world more civilized than they had ever been before.

Here is a story which shows just how wise Solomon was.

One day when he was holding court, that is, listening to the stories of all his people who had got into trouble and trying to decide wisely and punish justly, his officers brought before him two women who had been quarreling over a little child. A nurse carried the baby in her arms and the two women stood before the king.

"What is your trouble?" asked Solomon kindly.

And one woman said, "O my lord, I and this woman dwell alone in one house. We each had a little one, but one night her baby died. Then she came softly while I slept and stole away my warm, living baby and left her own dead child in its place. When I awoke and found a dead child in my arms I looked carefully and saw that it was not my child at all."

"Then the other woman interrupted and said, "Nay, but the dead child is your son. The living child is mine."

And so they argued there before Solomon and there seemed no way to decide since no other person had seen the babies.

And the king said, "Bring me a sword." And they brought a sword before the king. "Divide the living child in two and give half to one and half to the other," said the king. Then spake the woman who was the real mother and loved the baby, unto the king, and said, "O my lord, give her the living child and in no wise slay it."

But the other woman said, "Let it be neither mine or thine, but divide it."

Then the king answered and said, "Give her the living child and in no wise slay it; for she is the mother thereof."

And all the people heard of the king's wisdom and they feared him.

Some of King Solomon's Proverbs

A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger.

A merry heart doeth good like medicine.

He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.

Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.

Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging.

A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches and loving favor rather than silver and gold.

Seest thou a man diligent in business? He shall stand before kings.

Cast thy bread upon the waters for thou shalt find it after many days.

Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise.

A Poem by Solomon

Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain;

In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders shall cease, because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened.

And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low;

Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern;

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. Ecclesiastes, xii.

Related Work. Locate Gibeon and Lebanon.

Examine a diagram or a picture of the temple built by Solomon. Two descriptions of the temple and of the building of it are found in the Old Testament, one in First Kings, Chapters V and VI, the other in Second Chronicles, Chapters II, III, and IV.

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

Once each year all the people of Israel, the tribes of Reuben and Gad from beyond the Jordan, Judah and Simeon from their far southern homes, Dan and Asher and Zebulun and Naphtali from their northern homes near the sea of Galilee, Ephraim and Manasseh from their homes near the center of the land, came together at one of the 'high places', Bethel or Gilboa or Hebron or Succoth, for a great feast. This was called the feast of tabernacles, or the feast of booths. It was a great thanksgiving feast, lasting seven days. During these seven days all the people lived in booths made of the boughs of trees and that is why it was called the feast of booths.

This feast celebrated the gathering of the harvest. The rich stores of grain, wheat and barley, the olives and oil, the grapes that they made into wine, all were safely harvested. Now let winter come! They did not fear it.

At this time also the priests offered sacrifices each day as thank offerings, sacrifices of lambs and kids and young bullocks. The fat they separated from the flesh and burned on the altar to God, but the flesh was roasted and eaten by the people.

Each group of people brought some gift to God in token of gratitude. Some came carrying boughs of fruit, olives, dates, figs or grapes. Others bore measures of golden grain or jars of wine. But all was given as a thank offering to God.

When the sacrifices were over, then the people visited among themselves. Old friends who had not seen each other for a long time met and told each other the latest news. Relatives, reunited, asked eager questions about the new homes and babies. Boys and girls who had never seen each other before played together.

Story tellers squatted in the sunshine and told long, wonderful tales of brave deeds, of glorious battles, or of faith in God rewarded.

Men danced alone or women danced together to the music of lute, of harp or drums. They chanted old, weird songs—battle songs, love songs, or praises of their God.

This is an old story about one of their feasts:

There were many men of the tribe of Benjamin who had no wives. There were not enough women in the tribe. They were young men and they wanted to find beautiful, young girls in order to marry them.

When it came time for the feast of tabernacles, these young men went up to Shiloh, but instead of mingling with their own people and having a good time with them they hid themselves among the grape vines. There they lay very quietly, waiting until the fair young girls of Shiloh came out to dance. Soon evening came and the musicians struck up the music of the dance. The steady throb, throb, of the drums made them all want to dance

their own men's dances, but they waited on watch for the girls instead.

Here they come, swaying and circling to the music. They wear thin, white garments, with many golden bracelets and rings on their arms and fingers. Their hair hangs free in long, dark curls. They lift their pretty arms and bow and laugh.

Far back among the grape vines are the young men on watch. When the music is loudest, and all the people watch the dancers intently, then, with a great shout, the young men leap out among the dancers. Each man selects his bride and carries her away to his far off country. There they make a home and live happily together.

Related Work. Locate the homes of the several tribes on a map, and also the central places where they met to hold the great feast.

Make a picture or a model of the camp of tabernacles, or booths, at the time of the feast.

THE KINGDOM IS DIVIDED

THERE is an old story of a father who, as he lay dying, called his ten sons to him to teach them a lesson.

"Here," he said, "is a bundle of sticks. Break it in two."

Now, though the ten sons were all strong men, no one of them could break the bundle. Each one tried hard but at last gave up in despair.

Then the poor old father took the bundle, and, separating the sticks, broke them one by one with his weak, trembling hands.

"See, my sons," he said, "so long as you are united, no one, no matter how strong, can break you. Be then loyal to each other, every man standing by his brother, and all will be well with you when I am gone."

King Solomon died, leaving the twelve tribes of Israel bound together like the bundle of sticks. But no sooner was he dead than the tribes began quarrelling among themselves.

Rehoboam, Solomon's son, was really king; but Jeroboam, a man who had fled to Egypt to escape Solomon's displeasure, came back to Jerusalem as soon as he had heard of Solomon's death, and began to make trouble.

Rehoboam, the king, had two groups of men to advise him. One group was made up of old, wise men who had counseled Solomon for many years. The other group was made up of young men of about Rehoboam's own age. To the old men Rehoboam said,

"What shall I do with Jeroboam and these other dissatisfied people who complain that my father was hard upon them?"

The old men said, "If you wish really to win Jeroboam and his followers to yourself and Israel, speak gently to them. Be fair and just to them. By such means you will win their friendship."

Then Rehoboam spoke to his young men and said,

"How shall I speak to Jeroboam and his followers?"

And the young men said, "Say to these people, 'Where my father loaded you with a heavy yoke, I will add heaviness to that yoke. My father has chastised you with whips but I will chastise you with scorpions.'" After Rehoboam had listened to both groups of counselors, he decided to follow the advice of the young men.

When Jeroboam and his followers heard these harsh words it made them very angry and they decided to desert King Rehoboam and set up a kingdom for themselves, with Jeroboam for their king. So the kingdom was divided. Rehoboam was left in Jerusalem to be king over the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. In time they came to be called Jews. But the ten other tribes went

away to Shechem and made Jeroboam their king. They were still called Israelites.

Neither Rehoboam nor Jeroboam was a good king as David and Solomon had been. Jeroboam, indeed, did a very wicked thing. He was afraid that if his people were to go up to Jerusalem regularly on pilgrimages to the temple to worship they would be tempted to take back Rehoboam as their king; so he made two golden calves and set one up in the city of Dan and the other one in the city of Bethel, and said,

"Behold, here is an image of the god who brought you up out of Egypt. Worship here in Dan or Bethel and cease to go up to Jerusalem.

And the people, forgetting what Moses had taught them, of the great, wise, loving God of Abraham, worshipped before the golden images.

King Jeroboam died and other kings came and went; but the people still worshipped before the golden images. After many, many years, the king of Assyria came with a great army and defeated the Israelites in battle and carried them all away into captivity. Shalmaneser, this king of Assyria, made slaves of these captive Israelites. Many others were killed in battle. Others still escaped to Egypt and many of them died there in prisons. Like the sticks which the feeble old man broke one by one, so were the Israelites broken and scattered so that men ever since have spoken of them as 'the lost tribes of Israel.'

Rehoboam's subjects, too, though they were not defeated by the Assyrians, were later conquered and carried away by a great Babylonian general and king named Nebuchadnezzar. It was to that same Babylonia from which Abraham had fled, oh so long, long ago, to find freedom to worship God and start a great nation, that these Jews were carried back.

Some were thrust into foul, dark prisons and some were put to hard, cruel labor; all were disgraced and

humiliated. Jerusalem's walls were broken down. Solomon's marvelous temple was ransacked from end to end, all its golden furnishings were carried away, and all its faithful priests were killed. The only Jews left in the Promised Land were a small remnant of simple peasants who had almost miraculously escaped death or capture by taking refuge, each man for himself, high up in the mountains.

All this happened about six hundred years before the Christian era.

For seventy years the captive Jews dwelt in Babylonia. They were slaves to Nebuchadnezzar. Some of them, like Daniel, by means of their wisdom and skill in interpreting dreams, gained favor with the king and were promoted to positions of trust.

Then the Babylonians were conquered by the Persians under Cyrus. He permitted and encouraged the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple. Cyrus did not set the Jewish captives free. As their conqueror, he still exacted tribute from them; but he allowed them to return to their native land, rebuild their temple and re-establish their religion in Jerusalem. As the result of these bitter experiences as a captive people, the Jews never again worshipped before the images of other gods but clung to the unseen God shown them by Moses of whom no image was ever to be made. Not yet, however, had they broadened their conception of God to take in the whole human race.

Then the great Alexander from Greece conquered the world and wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. So, Cyrus and the Persians, and of course the Jews as Persian captives fell under Greek rule.

Through contact with the Babylonians, the Persians, and then the Greeks, the Jews came into touch with the leading civilizations of the world. They never again

attained national independence. Those Jews who were living in Palestine at the beginning of the Christian era were under Roman rule.

Related Work. Demonstrate the bundle-of-sticks story.

Locate Schechem, the seat of Jeroboam's kingdom.

Locate Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Greece, and Rome.

Recall the whole story of the Hebrew people from the time Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees until their return to the region about Jerusalem, the "Promised Land," and trace the general routes of their great migrations on a map.

Refer to the statement about the periods of time in Hebrew History in the Introduction in this book, and note how the events related in these stories are distributed over the fifteen hundred years from the birth of Abraham to the return of the Hebrews from the Babylonian Captivity.

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